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Defending the Heart of Aztlan

Javier Benavidez

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For the “muy buena gente” of Barelmas, USA

“Defending the Heart of Aztlan”

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Professional Project, Submitted in Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of

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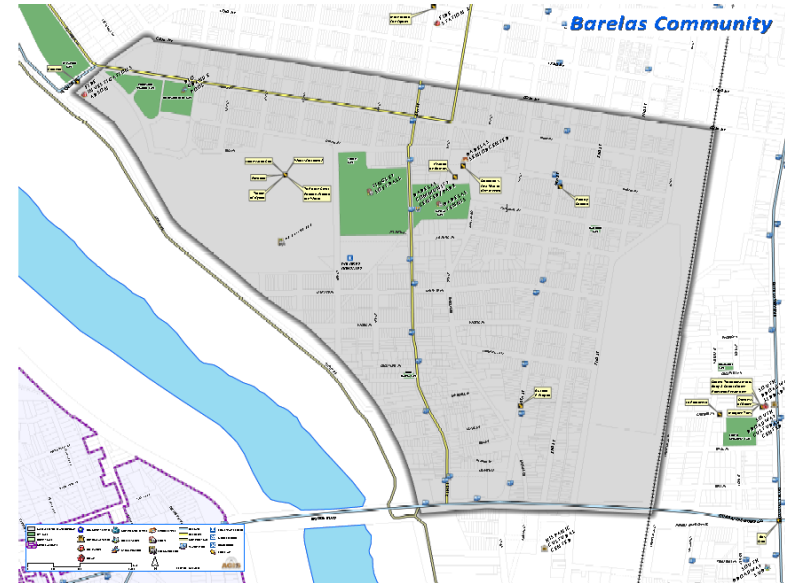


Figure 1: A Map of the Barelas Neighborhood, 2011



A westward looking aerial view reveals how Barelas is bound on the north by Downtown Albuquerque, the Rio Grande River to the west, the National Hispanic Cultural Center and Avenida Cesar Chavez to the South, and the Rail Yards and railroad tracks to the east.

INTRODUCTION

The “Heart of Aztlan”



The “Bienvenidos a Barelitas” (“Welcome to Barelitas”) sign at the corner of 4th & Coal on the neighborhood’s northern border.

Located just south of Downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico, the historic community of Barelitas is a revered place of culture, tradition, and identity, described as a one-of-a-kind *Heart of Aztlan*, by authors like Rodolfo Anaya. Throughout its history, the neighborhood has undergone significant periods of development, investment, disinvestment, distress, revitalization, strengthening and uncertainty. Though one of Albuquerque’s poorest neighborhoods in average income (CABQ, p. 19), *Baraleños* love the neighborhood’s many long-time families, vibrant cultural festivities like the Christmas Posadas, and *places of the heart*. Those places include the Barelitas Community Center with its murals, the Barelitas Senior Center and its weekly dances, 4th Street and its many small local businesses, the Barelitas Coffee House as a regional attraction, Sacred Heart Church and its annual fiestas, the formerly vacant and now revived Coronado

Elementary, and the National Hispanic Cultural Center with its aim of celebrating and preserving the area’s culture.

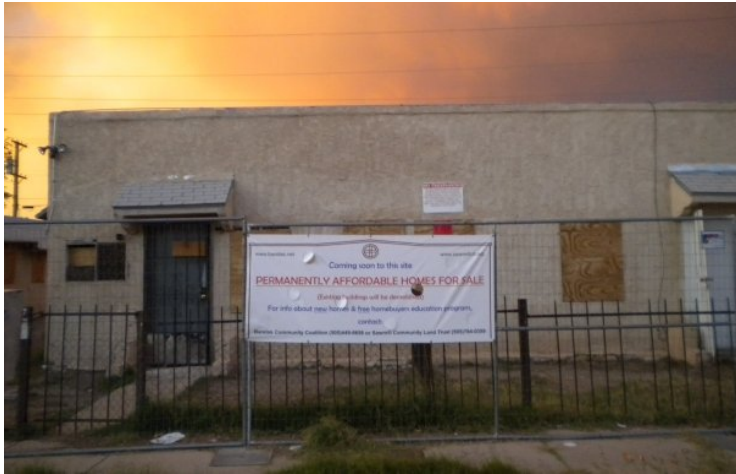
The neighborhood has a long history of community activism and many of the positive results of that mobilization remain today. The development of the Barelitas Community Center for example, resulted from organizing among Barelitas residents, the League of United Latin American Citizens and the National Youth Administration Center during the 1940s (CABQ, page 7).



This mural on the Barelitas Community Center gym, by muralist Francisco LeFebre, depicts the history of the Barelitas neighborhood.

Many streetscape improvements and business façade improvements were made possible by local business organization (CABQ, p. 8) during the 1990s. During the first decade of the millennium, the neighborhood has also played successful defense against blights on the neighborhood, including a fight to close the former A&P Bar on 3rd Street and an effort to prevent the gas station at 8th and Avenida Cesar Chavez from expanding its liquor sales. In 2010, the neighborhood successfully achieved the removal of a long-abandoned and dilapidated apartment complex at 7th and Iron that had served as a magnet for criminal activity and ;

nuisance for surrounding neighbors (Rodriguez, 2010). The property is now being developed as a site of permanently affordable housing with the Sawmill Community Land Trust.



Prior to being demolished to build affordable housing, the abandoned apartment complex at 7th & Iron had become a nuisance for neighbors.

However, today and in light of many aligning external pressures, the community stands at a crossroads. “Gentrification,” has begun to become visible in the neighborhood and this paper will provide insight on how that trend is occurring. Barelas neighbors are working hard to defend the neighborhood’s extraordinary *sense of place* and desirability for long-time Barelas families. This paper will both highlight those efforts and provide technical support to the neighborhood’s strategies.

To better understand gentrification and to identify how its dynamics are impacting Barelas, I begin with a study of peer-reviewed literature on the topic to provide a definition of the gentrification trend. I then examine several case studies of communities in other cities said to be “gentrified,” followed by an assessment of how economic indicators have changed in Barelas

over recent years. With mostly anecdotal information suggesting gentrification is happening in Barelas, this paper provides data to verify whether those suggestions are accurate. With neighborhood activists striving to prepare the neighborhood for significant changes to come, it also provides recommendations for how they can most effectively address the consequences tied to the trend of gentrification. The paper provides two matrices to help with this understanding. One identifies the symptoms of gentrification in the neighborhood according to traits identified by literature and data in Barelas from the United States Census Bureau and other research. The other provides a template Kellogg Logic Model which, given the Kellogg Foundation’s significant support of Barelas community organizations, provides neighborhood leaders with one methodology in which to measure, evaluate and fortify their hard work to *defend the Heart of Aztlan*.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON GENTRIFICATION



Newer condominiums dwarf an older row-style house on 3rd Street in Barelaz.

Definition of Gentrification

The Encyclopedia of Housing defines gentrification as “the process by which central urban neighborhoods that have undergone disinvestments and economic decline experience a reversal, reinvestment, and the in-migration of a relatively well-off, middle- and upper middle-class population” (Van Vliet, 1998). Teresa Córdova noted that identification of the process began to emerge in the mid-1970s and was especially visible in the growing trend of young affluent professionals moving into older, usually minority-majority neighborhoods that previously faced disinvestment. As a result of that trend, Córdova also noted an accompanying consequence for existing families in changes such as increased rents, property values, and transformations in the character of the neighborhood. Efforts to revitalize the community by newer

residents, especially in cases when they didn’t involve existing families, “[ran] the risk of revitalizing these residents right out of the neighborhood” (Córdova, 1991). Later in this paper, further research by Córdova will be highlighted, which provides strategies to communities striving to stave off gentrification.

In his book Uneven Development, Neil Smith discusses the process of *devalorization*, in which the combined disinvestment of the public sector, realtors, speculators and bankers systematically reduces the value of a neighborhood’s housing and increases rates of renting versus home ownership (Smith, 2008). In some cases this cycle is accelerated by a tactic of “blockbusting,” in which investors emphasize the fear of neighborhood decline in order to convince remaining owners to sell their houses for lower prices. Also as part of devalorization, much has been written about *banl redlining*, in which lending is systematically reduced in certain geographic areas, pushing landlords toward abandoning their properties.

On the other side of the devalorization cycle, many scholars have examined the phenomenon of gentrification as part of a cycle in which older neighborhoods are becoming “hotter” real estate markets because of their investment potential. As a result, they’re an affordable target for investors, realtors, new businesses and also increased investment by public entities. Often the gradual change in a neighborhood’s character takes place not through rapid, observable transformation but rather through gradual piecemeal changes over the course of time. Together, over many years, changes such as zoning exemptions, rising housing prices, closing businesses, and disinvestment/investment in community infrastructure contribute to changes in the overall community’s *sense of place*.

How does gentrification come about?

Córdova noted that displacement is at the crux of gentrification. Through no choice of their own, established residents of a gentrifying neighborhood are either priced out or pressured out by changing cultural dynamics in what was previously their community. Market forces that are focused on building wealth and increasing investment return overpower those families' ability to stay in the neighborhood. Gentrification therefore boils down to a focus on space as a means for profit and speculation rather than preservation of culture or "sense of place." Property by property, rental contract by rental contract, families are increasingly forced to choose between financial viability and staying in the neighborhood in which they grew up.

Lance Freeman identified five particular characteristics that demonstrate gentrification and even further explain the stage of gentrification in which various neighborhoods sit: 1) the neighborhoods sit in the center of the city, 2) the neighborhood consists of mostly low-income neighbors, and 3) those neighbors have experienced disinvestment by the powers that be. One possibility is that disinvestment is often a choice by public officials, often because poorer and disenfranchised neighborhoods yield lesser return in political capital than investment in more well-to-do neighborhoods. In other words, more affluent neighborhoods likely yield higher returns in greater densities of voters than less affluent neighborhoods. Freeman continues with conditions of actual effects of gentrification taking place, including 4) the arrival of more affluent or "upwardly mobile" residents and 5) a resulting increase in investment by political interests and market forces. In his study of neighborhoods that have undergone differing levels of gentrification, however, Freeman chooses to focus on education rather than income, noting that "artists" moving into a neighborhood, for example, are often the recipients of privilege in

education, yet choose to live unstructured lifestyles when it comes to measurable income (Freeman, 2005).

As a result of the study, Freeman was able to examine whether gentrification was, in fact, a result of neighbors in gentrifying neighborhoods being "priced out" of their houses due to rising costs in expenses such as property taxes. The theory, in other words, was that gentrification occurred because residents on fixed incomes could no longer afford to live in neighborhoods as a result of increases in their property values and the accompanying valuation of their properties by taxing authorities. His study asked "movers" why they'd left the neighborhood and instead found no significant tie between these kinds of transformations and the reasons gentrification was taking place. Freeman also discussed the benefits to gentrified neighborhoods, including "increased amenities, improved public services, and rehabilitated housing."

Instead, Freeman discovered that rather than residents being measurably displaced due to increasing costs in their original neighborhoods, gentrification took place more clearly in the valuation of properties made available by vacating neighbors. This was made most visible among rental properties in Freeman's study because of how flexible rental rates were. With particular neighborhoods made more attractive by gentrification forces descendants and formerly dependents of original neighborhood residents found rental properties less accessible due to the increases made possible by gentrification. Lower income renters, therefore, were the most immediate victims of these dynamics given the inflexibility of their budgets to account for raises in the cost of rent. The "smoking gun" in the many gentrified neighborhoods that Freeman studies was therefore not in residents being displaced but rather the rapid and aggressive nature in which available properties are sought out by purchasers. As Freeman states, gentrification "is perhaps a more gradual process that

although displacing some, leaves its imprint mainly by changing who moves into a neighborhood.”

Another author, Daphne Spain, examined the conflict between conflicting community identities by examining “Been-Heres versus Come Heres” (Spain, 1993). At the heart of gentrification, she noted, were conflicts between definitions of community amongst long-time residents and newcomers. She took interest in the use of particular frames around revitalization including characterizing newcomers as “urban pioneers,” which she believed suggested that the “urban wilderness” needed to be “tamed.”

Spain notes that such frames have roots in frontier and salvation imagery, much like colonization throughout history. In particular, Spain took interest in how newcomers considered old-timers inadequate stewards of the community and therefore in need of “salvation.” In one example of the trend, the progression of this conflict could lead to increased calls for code enforcement by new residents, calling for property improvements that older residents could not afford.

Sharon Zukin described the economic angle of “gentrifiers,” characterizing them with the perspective that “alternative consumers are not so innocent agents of change (Zukin, 2008). In her research, gentrifiers’ desire for alternative foods, both gourmet and organic, and for ‘middle class’ shopping areas encouraged a dynamic of urban redevelopment that displaced working class and ethnic minority consumers. Zukin studied the different transformations of commercial spaces as their surrounding neighborhood’s consumers change due to forces of gentrification. Her research revealed that small businesses such as restaurants and local grocery stores were often some of the first to feel the brunt of such change.

Zukin studied commercial spaces in downtown districts from Portland, Oregon to London, Melbourne, and noted a trend in which changing populations demanded different types of “authenticity” for their shopping requirements. In some areas farmers’ markets and ethnic food stores have replaced more mainstream commercial spaces. In other areas, original restaurants have lost clientele to newer more trendy eateries and in many cases, closed down. In more advanced cases of gentrification, like in New York’s “SoHo,” farmers markets have been replaced by what Zukin refers to as “supergentrifiers,” or retailers that respond to the search for organic foods and such with even further commercialized methods. When a Whole Foods moved into SoHo near a neighborhood farmer’s market, for example, its ability to provide a diversity of food products when and how consumers wanted the products overwhelmed the smaller more local farmers market vendors and forced many to close down due to loss of clientele.

Zukin also examined consumers’ choices to relocate into gentrifying communities, describing the trend as a choice to live in such neighborhoods because of their “pure, original, ethnic, [and fresh]” characteristics. Zukin noted the premise developed by social theorist Rosseau and characterized the relocation decisions as a visceral reaction to privilege, or a shedding of the opulent extravagant and advantaged upbringings in search of something more natural, honest and organic. In other words, such consumers were in search of authenticity and seeking to be closer to “nature” than to “institutional disciplines of power” (Zukin, 728) Zukin noted that such moves earn the new residents “street cred” in their social circles.

What is gentrification’s impact and how is it visible?

Spain noted that impacts resulting from gentrification were visible in both the physical properties and interactive tendencies of

newcomer residents. Newer residents, in reaction to concerns about neighborhood safety and so on, would often choose to entertain guests or relatives inside their houses rather than in spaces more communal. In addition, their property improvements were often preoccupied with the “public display of private wealth,” in housing improvements, appliances, gourmet food and recreation. For those more mobile and not intending to stay in the neighborhood, their livelihood was dependent upon the development of their property, as well as the upkeep of those properties around them. On a broader scale, Spain noted that gentrification was shaped largely by market forces rather than government intervention. Even beyond standard rises in property values, Spain discussed the manners in which newcomers had the financial ability to complete repairs and upgrades to their properties while older residents did not.

George Galster and Jason Boonza described the changes in gentrified neighborhoods as a tilt toward becoming significantly more “bipolar” – not in a psychological sense, but rather in the spread between residents’ wealth, opportunity, and access to resources. By looking at the spread in incomes characteristic to census tracts, the article reveals how the shares of “very high-income families, racial diversity, shares of middle-aged persons, and shares of renters” have increased. The authors develop the related measurements in order to better understand if there are social consequences that arise for the more disadvantaged neighbors of these communities.

The outcomes of the study created by Galster and Boonza reveal “empirical trends [that] suggest an increase in a special sort of neighborhood, one that has very few but very different, income groups substantially represented” (Galster and Boonza, 424). The trend has increased at least four times between 1970 and 2000, with the number of “bipolar” neighborhoods rising from 2% to

8.8%. One of the most striking examples of a bi-polar trend was New York City, with 29.7% of its residents having incomes in either the lowest or highest income categories utilized by Galster and Boonza. The authors also note a coinciding increase in the number of renters who have moved into these neighborhoods. Census information does not allow enough detail to examine further trends that the authors wish to examine, including the likely rise of “high-income White renters and long-term, low-income minority home-owners” (Galster and Boonza).

Galster and Boonza noted that there were costs and benefits to neighborhoods being “bi-polar.” The benefits include “three categories of neighborhood effects: (1) local resources and institutions, (2) networking, and (3) role modeling and social control” (Galster and Boonza). The presence of high-income earners amongst the poor can help the neighborhood to exert more political clout. The costs, however, include gentrification and the inability of poorer neighbors’ children to be able to afford to transfer to nearby houses in the neighborhood unless their incomes have far out-paced those of their parents.

What can neighborhoods do to fight against gentrification?

Despite vast resources and widespread writing dedicated to identifying the gentrification trend in neighborhoods across the country, there exists a scarcity of writing dedicated specifically to how to defend neighborhoods against the trend. Córdova, for example, noted that although the influx of new residents often leads to what might seem like a positive reinvestment in the neighborhood, efforts to fight gentrification needed to simultaneously fight the devaluation of original residents. Efforts in defense of neighborhood character, in other words, had to learn that “either you rehabilitate your neighborhood or someone else will.” New residents took interest in changing the community around them, but often to fit their own tastes, cultures and

consumer patterns. Córdova also noted that often by the time community organizations had begun to activate against gentrification, the trend had already begun to take hold. For that reason, it was critical that neighborhoods pay attention to warning signs early on.

Galster and Boonza noted planning policies that could help to further the diversity of such neighborhoods rather than the stratification. These tools include “public housing redevelopment, rent vouchers, or inclusionary zoning-laws” (Galster and Boonza, p. 431). To better ascertain ways to further improve the qualities of life for all in bipolar neighborhoods, Galster and Boonza suggest further research into how planning interventions can do so.

Many tools mentioned in the various works cited exist independently, but there does not appear to be many collective guides providing neighborhoods guidance on how to combat gentrification holistically. “Streets of Hope,” a book about the Dudley Street Initiative in Boston, is one of those few rare examples that follows a neighborhood organization and documents its slew of approaches to strengthening the neighborhood and maintaining accessibility for existing families (Medoff and Sklar, 1999).

Once Boston’s most impoverished areas, the Dudley Street Initiative involved the formation of a non-profit community-based planning and organizing entity that eventually gained eminent domain authority to take over abandoned properties within the neighborhood’s boundaries. There is a definite need for continued documentation of neighborhoods’ efforts, like Dudley Street, to push back against the much more powerful economic forces of gentrification.

At a citywide level, in 2004, a task force was created in the City of Savannah, Georgia, to examine the impact of gentrification on various neighborhoods in the city that had begun to see development that risked the displacement of long-time residents. In the report, entitled “One Savannah,” participants noted that although “Savannah has prospered in recent years..., all its residents have not equitably shared its prosperity. Increasingly, two Savannahs are emerging.” Much like the impending Rail Yard development in Albuquerque, the historic Thomas Square area of Savannah was undergoing redevelopment to attract investment and tourism, forcing the question about how the city’s existing residents were being affected.



Downtown Savannah, Georgia

Task force members created a matrix to examine the city’s various neighborhoods and the possible effects of gentrification in each. They began with a positive and negative analysis of gentrification. On the positive side, they noted “improved viability of neighborhoods, redevelopment or renovation of housing stock attraction of new businesses, revitalization of tax base, increased homeownership rates, economic opportunity/new jobs in low income areas, and improved vibrancy of downtown and urban

neighborhoods. On the negative side, they noted displacement of original residents/businesses, a change in neighborhood character/identity, a loss of neighborhood diversity, lack of affordable housing, a decrease in multi-family and rental units, conflict between old and new residents, and conversion of residential units of commercial property” (SMPC, 2004).

Whether considered positive effects or not, impacts upon established residents were significant, both with rises in taxation assessments and in increased demand upon those residents to bring their properties up to code. In order to attempt to provide some level of predictability about the vulnerability of the neighborhoods being studied, members of the task force came up with a matrix with which to identify gentrifying neighborhoods. Leading indicators for the matrix included “a high rate of renters, ease of access to downtown, significant decline in population, historic architecture, and comparatively low housing cost.” For strong signs that gentrification was already occurring, the task force listed “lack of affordable housing, shifts in housing tenure, increases in household income, increases in home values and increases in redevelopment activities.” This targeting allowed the community to focus their efforts on areas most vulnerable to the changes occurring in and around Thomas Square.

Some of the key strategies identified by researchers on the task force included permitting a variety of housing, services, workplaces, and civic institutions in neighborhoods, density incentives, identification of potential sites for new affordable housing development, the reduction of zoning barriers to affordable housing, and the retention of owner-occupied housing. In addition, suggestions for the development of Thomas Square included inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, the removal of unnecessary regulatory barriers to affordable housing, planning for the long-term viability of established residential areas. In addition,

members suggested the creation of a housing trust fund, new development linkage fees, tax increment financing, expanded assistance to home owners, increased access to capital for local small business, business retention teams. The One Savannah report concluded with suggestions that diversity and pluralism be promoted and that strategies like a Tax Increment Financing district support funding for “affordable housing, neighborhood facilities, and business incubators in areas vulnerable to gentrification” (One Savannah, 2004).

The following section offers three case studies of neighborhoods in various stages of gentrification for the sake of identifying the gentrification trend’s impacts in modern day communities. That section is then followed by a comparison of such trends in Barelas and finally, the highlighting of various strategies being employed by Barelas residents, along with recommendations on how those measures can find further support.

CASE STUDIES IN GENTRIFICATION

Santa Fe, New Mexico

New Mexicans don't have to look far for a strong example of gentrification, as demonstrated in the state's capital of Santa Fe over recent decades. One particular neighborhood's story was highlighted in a 2006 book by Jason Silverman called the Untold New Mexico: Stories from a Hidden Past. The chapter, entitled "Paving History," narrates the gentrification of Canyon Road, previously one of the town's original neighborhoods and now a world-renowned art gallery attraction.



Since it became an arts and crafts district in the 1950s, Canyon Road has become a magnet for tourism and multi-million dollar residences.

Silverman describes the conflict in 1962 over whether to pave what was previously a historic trail, utilized mostly by Pueblo Indians to travel up the Santa Fe Canyon Trail toward Pecos Pueblo. One of the city's oldest thoroughfares. Canyon Road was eventually paved and also designated a "residential arts and crafts district." Today it is described as "one of the world's most picturesque, lined with magnificent adobe homes, galleries, and restaurants." One eyewitness of Canyon Road's "gentrification" offered the following description:

Tourists would never come up here, Gonzales said of Canyon Road in the 1950s. 'There was nothing to see, there were no artists. A few stragglers would drive up and back. But now it's a constant procession. During the summer it's like a carnival.' He's grateful that Canyon Road has become a gathering place but admits to having some 'hellacious arguments' with gallery owners. 'Most of them don't care about the people who have lived here all their lives' he said (Silverman, 145-146).



The author's Father on Acequia Madre Road, which runs parallel to Canyon Road, circa 1950.

The great-grandparents of this paper's author grew up a block away, on Acequia Madre, which runs parallel to the road which was once "El Camino del Cañon." "Acequia Madre's" translation is "mother waterway" and much of the area has an agrarian history through the canyon. Memories of the house include a dirt driveway, a broken-down wooden screen-door and a small fruit tree orchard behind the house. Though one of the small houses on the property remains in the family, the property was subdivided several years ago and the other two-bedroom, 1940s era house was sold for something in the neighborhood of \$900,000.

Although to a lesser degree, the rest of the City of Santa Fe has also experienced consequences of a housing market that increased rapidly in value during the late part of the 20th century. According to a 2007 Housing Analysis commissioned by the City of Santa Fe, at the end of 2006, the median sale price of single-family homes in Santa Fe had risen to almost \$350,000, nearly 7 times the median household income (Sullivan, 2007). The report also noted that because home purchasers are typically only qualified to purchase homes that are three to four times their income, the Santa Fe housing market was rapidly exceeding the reach of those who'd lived and worked there.

The story of Santa Fe's housing market justifies concerns about the impact of gentrification upon working families' ability to afford housing in the area in which they've lived for generations. In addition to their children being unable to afford to move into nearby properties, existing residents are also affected by rising property values and the resulting tax assessments. In a High Country News article quoted by Silverman, "rising property taxes force sixth- and seventh-generation natives to leave their modest adobes to make way for Californians and Texans."

San Francisco's Mission District



"Women's Building" in San Francisco's Mission District

San Francisco's Mission District is a salient story of gentrification. Within the course of three years, between 1996 and 1999, average rent rates for two-bedroom apartments in the neighborhood went from \$600.00 a month to \$1800.00 a month (Nieves, 1999). This was an especially hard hit for a neighborhood in which 84% of the population lived in rental housing. Much of the rapid rise was attributed to the "dotcom bubble" that arose in California's Bay Area during the same period, as well as San Francisco's constrained real estate space and proximity to the "Silicon Valley" to the south. Each of these characteristics earned the neighborhood extreme popularity amongst "hipsters," especially those looking for a more affordable place to live in San Francisco. However, like Barelak, the Mission District had a deeply entrenched culture and history that many felt was destroyed by the rapid onslaught of gentrification.



San Francisco's Mission District

Like Baretas, in the decades prior to the above mentioned period, San Francisco's Mission District was a neighborhood populated largely by working-class Latino families and small businesses that catered to them. Though their average incomes were far lower than the rest of the city, the area had gained popularity as an epicenter of "Latino culture and politics during the 1960s as well as the 1970s" (Nyborg, 2008). Residents remember its streets being filled with Latino intellectuals, artists and political activists. The changes that came in the late 1990s were therefore quite visible as many of the area's industrial buildings were transformed into higher priced lofts for young professionals, or "yuppies," in search of the area's unique urban charm.

Along with the changing residential patterns, new businesses came in to serve the new constituencies. Older businesses like Latino-oriented restaurants were replaced by newer "bistro-style" restaurants or "boutique" stores seeking to serve new upscale residents. Older neighborhood grocery stores were replaced with higher-priced stores and chains catering to upper-income customers. With these rapid changes occurring in the commercial and residential sectors in the Mission District, renters

in the neighborhood were hit hardest because landlords were compelled to get the highest rent prices out of their properties. Without regulations, the area's rent average rent prices tripled over the course of just three years.



A sign-post in San Francisco's Mission District reveals a sentiment toward newer residents during the late 1990s transformation of the neighborhood

The high level of political activism in San Francisco helped push back, nevertheless. Various community organizations in the Mission District took on the mantle of addressing gentrification through community organizing and popular education campaigns. The Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition, for example, went door-to-door explaining zoning change threats to the neighborhood and engaging established neighbors in the process of envisioning the neighborhood's future. Other organizations were much more dissident in nature, encouraging vandalism against the property of new "yuppy" residents in the Mission District (Van Derbeken 1999). These types of efforts were successful in some areas but there remained no question that the Mission District was changed forever. Many attribute the unstoppable gentrification to the neck

breaking pace at which the changes took place and the inability of the community to properly mobilize in its face.

Such rapid gentrification in the Mission District during the late 1990s was often a mixed-blessing. Many long-time neighbors welcomed the increased investment by local government and decrease in crime. However, the rise of “bi-polar” characteristics in the neighborhood are difficult and recent interviews with long-time residents of the Mission District reveal the aftermath of the rapid changes (Nyborg, 2008). They note a loss of connectivity among neighbors and a damaged sense of friendliness to families. Many children of existing families who have entered into the workforce can no longer afford to live in the Mission District so they’ve moved into more affordable municipalities like Oakland and Richmond.

Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles

Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles, California, is a much larger area (approximately 85,000 residents) than San Francisco’s Mission District and similar in character to Baretas because of its impoverished and working class characteristics. 75% of the area’s residents are renters compared to the broader Los Angeles area’s rate of 61% (Boyle Heights Community Plan, 1998). As of recently, there were no Starbucks, Chilis Restaurants, or Wal Marts in the community like in other California suburbs; residents patronized more local businesses (Avila-Hernandez, 2005). However, because of the neighborhood’s proximity to Downtown Los Angeles and the city’s mega-economy, rents are so high that families need to earn almost \$20.00 an hour to afford a typical apartment. Much like Baretas, residents cite one of the biggest needs in Boyle Heights as the need for rehabilitation of the area’s relatively low-density housing stock.



Boyle Heights view of Downtown Los Angeles

In the 1920s, the area was subdivided by “the East L.A freeway interchange and several highways that radiated out from it” (Acuna, 1984). Much like the impacts of the freeway building

the demise of the railroad, and the changing traffic patterns along 4th Street, these changes caused displacement in Boyle Heights and ended the area's high level of access to public transportation. In recent years, the area has seen disinvestment and rises in crime activity. During the 1990s, it was seen by many as the epicenter of gang activity in East Los Angeles with a devastating number of drive-by shootings. More recently, those adversities have eased thanks to the work of a slew of community organizations.



Sears Town development in Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles

Much like the Rail Yard Development in Albuquerque's Baretas, however, changes are afoot. Between 2001 and 2005, the average home sale prices in various Boyle Heights census tracts nearly doubled (Boyle Heights Community Plan, 1998). The area's proximity to Los Angeles' economic center and relative affordability have made it attractive to investment and one development in particular was being explored at the turn of the decade. The former Sears building, a 23.5 acre property was proposed as a "Sears Town" development with tenants including "772 residential units, 650,000 square feet of retail space, 85,000

square feet of office space, and 3,700 parking spaces (Avila Hernandez, 2005). The project's scale and pioneering characteristics led it to be the subject of a study by the Urban Land Institute which sought to provide advice on achieving the "highest and best use" of the property.

With the inclusion of \$50 million in public subsidies to accomplish the project, neighbors felt the right to weigh in on its development. For this reason, neighbors got started in researching the many ways in which they could help shape the project to benefit the surrounding community rather than contributing to its gentrification.



Not far from the Sears Town development, community organizations secured a "community benefits agreement" in LA's Staples Center development

The project's envisioning did spark division within the community. Some thought that it should not include housing because of its potential impact on local schools while others wanted the project to cater more to the established residents of the neighborhood with housing available to them. The project also reinforced the conflict between those who understood developmen

as an investment only rather than an opportunity to contribute to the strength of the surrounding neighborhood.

Neighbors sought the inclusion of various attributes to the development including amenities that served the surrounding community such as quality jobs for which those residents could train, affordable housing, and access to medical care. They sought a design process for the development that was inclusionary of surrounding neighborhoods rather than exclusionary. In doing so, they sought the inclusion of a “Community Benefits Agreement” with the developer which would explicitly outline the advantages that surrounding neighbors could expect out of the project. With a significant amount of public funding in the project, neighbors felt justified in having such a role in shaping the development.

COMPARISON WITH BARELAS

The three case studies examined provide important examples of differing levels of gentrification in real-world communities similar to Barelas. They demonstrate the effects of gentrification and help demonstrate how the changes take place. Given the importance of identifying such trends early, they also provide comparative opportunities for identifying ways in which gentrification might or might not be taking hold in Barelas.

Santa Fe’s Canyon Road community, for example, saw drastic changes in the second half of the 20th century that raised housing prices so dramatically that the neighborhood’s demographics are starkly different from 50-60 years ago. In the place of old residential houses and mini-grocery stores, the street is now one of the largest concentrations of high-end art galleries in the world. In addition, Santa Fe’s housing market is now largely out of reach of that which its workforce can afford. As time passes in Barelas, it’ll be helpful to watch the neighborhood’s housing values as well as efforts to brand the neighborhood in new

directions, including as an “artistic corridor.” It is possible to conduct revitalization in ways that maintain the neighborhood’s culture and character. Downtown Denver’s Santa Fe Street is one example that has included many cultural amenities that contribute to the neighborhood’s existing vitality rather than exchanging it for a dramatically different populace.

San Francisco’s Mission District at the turn of the century isn’t far off from how Barelas might be described today – a culturally vibrant and revered neighborhood of mostly working class Latino and immigrant families. A significant re-development such as the Rail Yards and the neighborhood’s proximity to Downtown Albuquerque make the neighborhood attractive to professionals looking for more affordable housing near their work and also to speculators looking to utilize real estate properties as investments. The Mission District’s rapid change over the course of the three years provides a good example for how rapidly that transformation can happen and also reveals that rental rates are a good indicator of the trend. It will therefore be important to monitor housing speculation and rental rates in Barelas just like in the Mission District.

Existing families’ testimonies about the decreasing friendliness and welcoming nature of the Mission District neighborhood is also a key identifier to observe in Barelas. In addition, Barelas’ commercial district is also subject to rapid transformation, as was visible in the Mission District’s changing consumer tastes as noted by the “Consuming Authenticity” article. With several small local grocery stores in Barelas having survived over for generations, it’ll be important to monitor whether patronage grows for those locations or instead shifts to new businesses.

The Boyle Heights case study provides an example of a similar working class neighborhood from East Los Angeles, in which the percentage of rental-oriented residential properties has risen to 75%, tying the neighborhood to more market force subjectivity. As will be discussed later in the paper, Barelás' rate of renters is lower, but this characteristic should be watched because of its significant contribution to a neighborhood's instability. In addition, housing structures in Boyle Heights, much like Barelás, have remained largely unchanged since the neighborhood was built as a subdivision to downtown LA and this trend has left many of the properties in need of rehabilitation. The same applies to Barelás' housing stock, built mostly as housing for employees of the Railyards during the early 20th century.

Much like Barelás' 4th Street was affected by the re-routing of north-south traffic to I-25, Boyle Heights also underwent significant disinvestment when the East L.A. freeway construction divided the neighborhood and reduced its public transportation options significantly. The proposed re-development of the large Sears Town complex, much like the Barelás Rail Yards' re-development provides an opportunity for incorporating assets into a re-development that serve the surrounding community, not just investors. Neighborhoods in Los Angeles have had useful experience in employing tools such as Community Benefits Agreements into developments like LA's Staples Center, so the case study also provides useful correlations in the realm of strategies to defend against gentrification.

In all, the case studies examined help to reveal that Barelás is not alone in its struggle to defend its existing families and sense of place against gentrification. They provide valuable information in how to identify the proliferation of such trends, as well as strategies to help neighborhood's prepare for them in the meanwhile. Gentrification is indeed a trend that has been identified

in hundreds of urban areas around the country and rather than attempting to reinvent the wheel in Barelás, those case studies can help Barelás neighbors to better identify gentrification trends early on and to get "ahead of the curve" in strategies to prepare for them

GENTRIFICATION IN BARELAS

As discussed in the literature review, Barelas underwent its own period of disinvestment and devalorization as part of the cycle that has contributed to its current vulnerability to gentrification. As referenced in *Barelas: Atraves de Los Años*, the neighborhood suffered from multiple difficult blows during the mid-to-late part of the 20th century. Those years included the gradual closing of the Rail Yards (the neighborhood's main employer), the bulldozing and displacement of the "Tortilla Flats" residential area, the building of the interstate highway that took traffic off of 4th Street, and the construction of Civic Plaza, which closed 4th Street off completely as a thoroughfare through Albuquerque. During the 80s and 90s, crime increased to the point that neighborhood organizations often focused on preventing gang activity with neighborhood marches and efforts to close down crime magnet properties.

In an August 2007 "platica" (dialogue) with the Barelas neighborhood about its challenges, Dr. Teresa Córdova noted five conditions that made the community ripe for gentrification: that the neighborhood was ripe for investment/real estate speculation, that it was positioned in a prime location, that encroachment was already visible, that there was a low homeownership rate, and a small housing stock. Given this "perfect storm" of gentrifying factors, the Barelas community is faced with an urgency of addressing housing conditions to allow for Barelas residents to stay in the neighborhood if they choose to and also to have options for their children to stay in the neighborhood if they decide to as well.

Similar to the trend of displacement discussed by Córdova, urban renewal had a significant impact on the southern half of the neighborhood by buying out, relocating dozens of families to other areas around the city, and bulldozing their houses for the sake of creating an industrial business park. In an entry about many

neighbors' feelings about the displacement that occurred, the author of *Atraves* notes that "neighborhoods crumbled as urban renewal modernized and sanitized the inner city by bulldozing hand-built family homes" (NHCC, 2010).

Disinvestment continued to be visible in the neighborhood's aging infrastructure, as was visible in the 2004 flooding that left many houses along 8th and Stover severely damaged by floodwaters when city drainage systems failed. As a result, city officials worked to build Tingley Park as a dual purpose drainage pond, but only after they were required to pay out significant settlements to neighbors who were devastated by the floods.

Like the case studies presented, many factors are contributing to growing gentrification pressures in the Barelas neighborhood. To the north of Barelas, Downtown Albuquerque has been redeveloped with a "2010" plan that sought to "have at least 20,000 people living within one mile of the Downtown Core and 5,000 living within the Downtown Core by 2010" (CABQ 2010). The proximity of Downtown Albuquerque's commercial center has made nearby access to housing attractive and the same has begun to take place with the proximity of the Barelas neighborhood.

The trend has made Barelas a prime target for an influx of new and different residents, as well as an increase in the community's housing values beyond what is accessible for existing families. One popular practice in this kind of trend includes the purchasing of homes that are then turned into rental properties. In recent years, Barelas has seen an increase in rental housing to the point that 50% of the neighborhood's residents are renters and don't own the places in which they live (CABQ, 2008). This

development also contributes to neighbor transiency and an increased disinvestment in the well-being of the neighborhood.

To the west of the Barelás neighborhood sits the Albuquerque Zoo and the Tingley Beach duck pond, two facilities that exemplify the investment of the City of Albuquerque in vibrant recreational amenities, yet a negligence of basic community infrastructure in the neighborhoods surrounding those facilities. The City has never fulfilled its promised parking structure to alleviate the zoo's parking impacts on the neighborhood and when it came to the street landscaping surrounding Tingley Beach, beautification ended where the Barelás neighborhood boundary began.

To the east of Barelás, neighbors have been working hard to help shape the development of the Albuquerque Railyards, a 27-acre tract of land that in the early 1900s served as the center of employment for the City of Albuquerque. Most railroad operations ceased on the property in the 1960s and in the 1990s, the property went completely vacant (ULI, 2008). Many of the original railyard buildings continue to stand, however, providing a towering and revered backdrop to the rest of the community. The property's prominence and proximity to downtown have made it a prime target of real estate developers and neighborhood leaders have found themselves in the defensive position of striving to make sure that the changing dynamics don't contribute to a loss of the neighborhood's character and accessibility forever.

Given the Rail Yards project's scale and impending impact on the surrounding housing, the project has the potential to serve as a "shock" to the neighborhood, accelerating gentrification and introducing drastically different activity to nearby neighbors and businesses. However, with the appropriate guidelines and public sector input, the project also has the potential to compliment the

neighborhood's existing strengths, by providing amenities that serve Barelás families as well as those that it attracts as a regional destination.



The inside of Albuquerque's Rail Yard Machine Shop are 160,000 square feet in size.

Many neighbors' interests in seeing a growers' market or grocery store built into the Rail Yard development does initiate the question brought up by Zukin in her article about "Consuming Authenticity." In the article, Zukin highlighted newer neighbors' desires to patronize more organic growers' markets and upscale grocery outlets instead of existing grocery stores. In some cases, growers' markets have been successful for short periods of time only to be overcome by "supergentrifiers" like Whole Foods that provide the same marketed products in a more mainstream fashion. The other consequence of locating a grocery store on the Rail Yard site would be its competition with existing neighborhood supermarkets like the Arrow Market and the Country Market Store on the neighborhood's west side. City Councilor Issac Benton has taken up an interesting strategy toward strengthening an existing grocery store on the north side of downtown, Lowe's, by

conducting a survey of surrounding residents to get a better feel for what they might like to see out of the existing grocery store. The opportunity exists for existing grocery stores to diversify and adapt to newer clienteles' tastes, while still keeping more affordable items available to existing residents. Still, in order to balance the Rail Yard's revitalization and the vitality of existing businesses like those on 4th Street, care will need to be taken with which businesses are subsidized into existence on the site.



The home of Adela Martinez, in the middle of the NHCC property.

To the south of the current Barelas neighborhood lies South Barelas, the National Hispanic Cultural Center (completed in 2000), and many industrial businesses like Bueno Foods and Rose's Papers. The now largely-commercial area, nevertheless, serves as a reminder of urban renewal of the 1970s, when many residences were cleared out of the area to make way for the area's current industrial tenants. Sofia Baca, a former resident of South Barelas' Tortilla Flats "remembers the struggle to gain enough community support to prevent the rezoning of South Barelas into an industrial zone" (El Bareleño, 2009). Eventually the property was re-zoned and approximately 50 homes were removed. One resident, however, withstood the area's development and though she passed away in 2000, the house of Mrs. Adela Martinez still

stands in the middle of the vast property increasingly occupied by the National Hispanic Cultural Center's buildings (ABQ Journal 2000). Though the center was built as a national attraction and one of the first and largest centers of its kind, Barelas neighbors continue to strive for ways to work together with the NHCC, to advance Barelas' vitality.

Throughout the neighborhood, some of the changes highlighted in the three case studies are becoming more and more evident. The Barelas Sector Development Plan notes that 58% of all housing in Barelas was built before 1959, leaving many of those properties in need of repair and often vulnerable to being targeted for buy-out. Although many of the neighborhood's original families continue to remain active in the community through Sacred Heart Church, the Barelas Senior Center, and other amenities, many of them and their children have moved out of the neighborhood. In other cases, they've moved on to other neighborhoods, but have kept their houses in Barelas as rentals for added income. In other cases, houses have been purchased by "speculators" hoping that housing demand and prices would increase in future years (ULI, p. 15).

In a report completed for the Albuquerque Rail Yard redevelopment by the Urban Land Institute, researchers looked at various trends in the neighborhood. Considering the neighborhood's high rate of renters, without a consistent presence and upkeep from each rented property's owner, such housing can often fall into disrepair or even sit vacant. Homeowners, on the other hand, tend to have a more long-term stake in investing in their property's upkeep and improvement. For this reason, various home-ownership oriented projects are beginning to make a difference in the neighborhood, including along 2nd and 3rd streets (the Greater Albuquerque Housing Project) and on 7th Street and Iron (the Sawmill Community Land Trust). As part of the Rail

Yard re-development, Barelas neighbors were also able to include in the project's required master development plan, 30 units of permanently affordable housing.

With the recent housing crisis and many investment properties now facing foreclosure, the role of "flipped" houses in Barelas' gentrification is less severe than before. Instead, neighbors are working to stabilize existing housing for long-term residents through programs such as weatherization. With many older residents living on fixed-incomes, rises in energy prices have considerable impacts on their annual budgets. Subsidized energy efficiency improvements provide a much-needed break to such residents' living expenses. The neighborhood association is also playing an often defensive role in challenging developers seeking to sub-divide and re-develop lots for the sake of re-sale at a profit. In partnership, with the Sawmill Community Land Trust, neighborhood leaders are working on establishing permanently affordable housing that will provide a more accessible avenue for families to remain in the neighborhood.

Particularly in light of the pending Rail Yard re-development, that gentrification stands to be accelerated significantly. Dependent upon what kind of businesses are recruited (i.e. Uptown ABQ's high-end retail focus) and what kind of housing is provided, the scale of the project stands to have a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood. For this reason, neighbors have been intensely involved in designing the city's request for proposals for the project.

One interesting trend in the neighborhood that remains is the presence of social service providers like the Brothers of the Good Shepherd and the Albuquerque Rescue Mission. Though neighbors nearby have fought for years to address the problems brought on by the providers' magnetism for criminal activity, their

presence is likely a factor in keeping the neighborhood from being even more attractive to new residents.

In addition, researchers have looked at other factors that have also contributed to accelerated gentrification in neighborhoods, including transit-oriented development that, for example, creates a transportation node in an area. The attractiveness of easy access to public transportation was demonstrated to increase property values by the Dukakis Center in a study entitled *Policy Toolkit for Equitable Transit-Rich Neighborhoods*. In the study, the Dukakis Center discovered that "in the neighborhoods where new light rail stations were built almost every aspect of neighborhood change was magnified... rents rose faster; owner-occupied units became more prevalent. Before transit was built, these neighborhoods had been dominated by low-income, renter households" (Bluestone, 2010). Though addressing the neighborhood's over-saturation of service-provider facilities and the completion of pedestrian and bicycle improvements along Barelas streets like 8th Street have taken quite some time to advance, it is possible that their advancement will contribute to the neighborhood's accelerated gentrification.



Lot subdivision and "flip" in progress in Barelas

DATA/INDICATORS OF GENTRIFICATION IN BARELAS

Taken together, the development dynamics surrounding Barelas make for a challenging time of urgency in which the neighborhood has found itself playing constant defense. Attempts to subdivide lots and then sell them for profit, requests for zoning changes, the inability of existing residents to afford to stay, and a lack of accountability of certain community organizations have contributed to a piece-by-piece chipping away at the neighborhood's strengths.

Beyond anecdotal examples, however, it helps to look at trends demonstrated through the Decennial Census, examining changes in the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000. Unfortunately, at the time of this paper's presentation, block-level information from the 2010 U.S. Census had not yet been made available for New Mexico. The presented charts and their accompanying spreadsheets in the appendices can be easily adjusted to include a third column with the 2010 information and a better look at each chart's continued direction in the first decade of the millennium.

The following charts examine how income, home values, education, time in each house, and rental rates have changed between 1990 and 2000 in Barelas. Though some of the block groups composing Barelas were combined in 2000, it is possible to compare the same geometric data utilizing the block groups included in maps below and on the following page. The 1990 Census information includes Tract 14's Block Groups 2-6 and Tract 22's Block Group 2. The 2000 Census utilizes Tract 14's Block Groups 2-4 and Tract 22's Block Group 2.

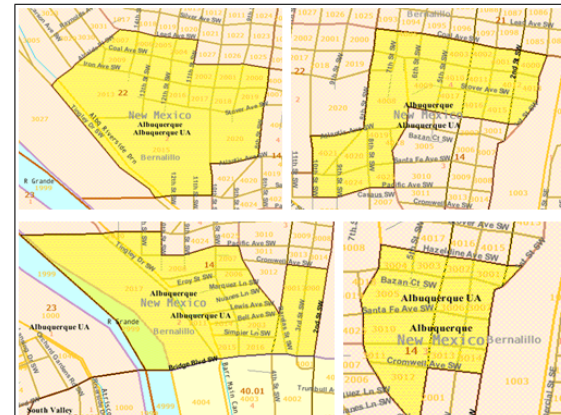


Figure 2: Block Groups in Barelas in the 1990 Census

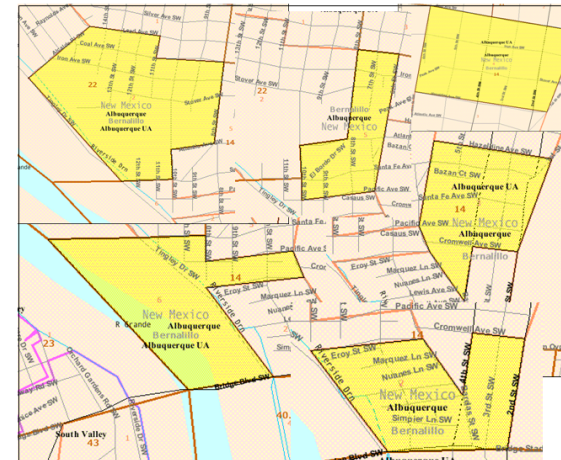


Figure 3: Block Groups in Barelas in the 2000 Census

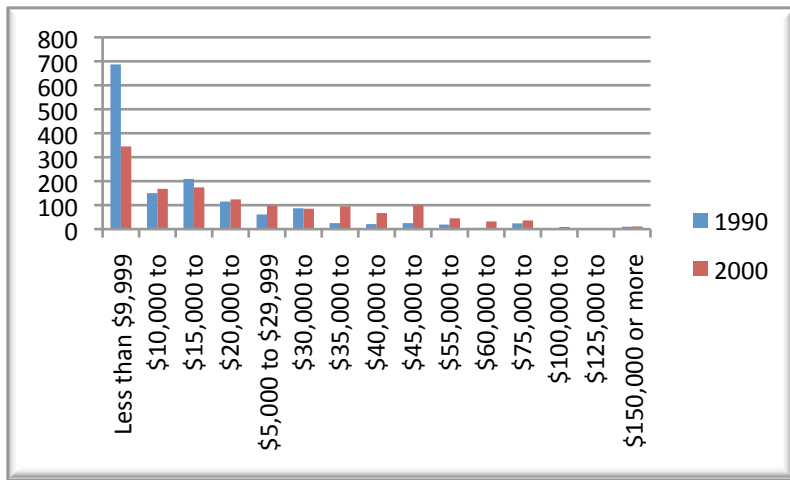


Figure 4: Household Income in Barelvas, 1990 and 2000

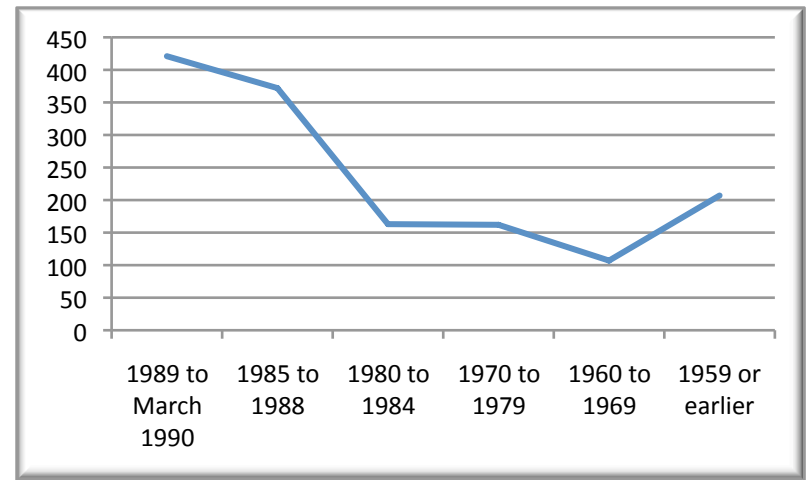


Figure 6: Number of Householders Who Moved into Barelvas during the noted timeframes, 1990 Census

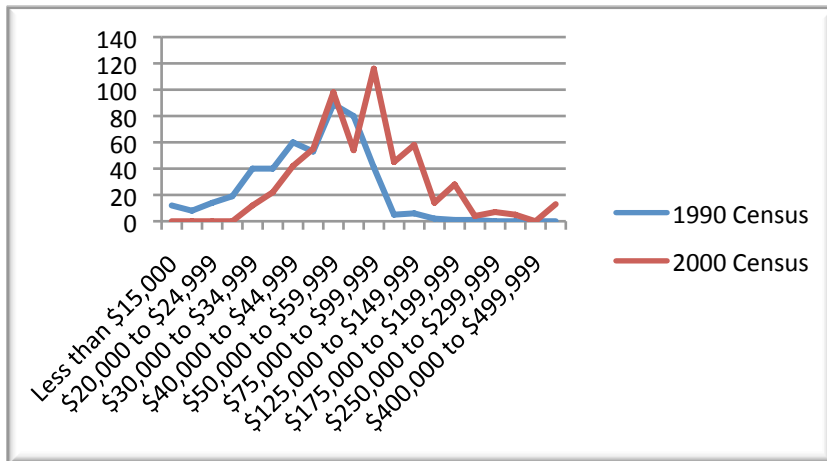


Figure 5: Housing Unit Value, 1990 and 2000

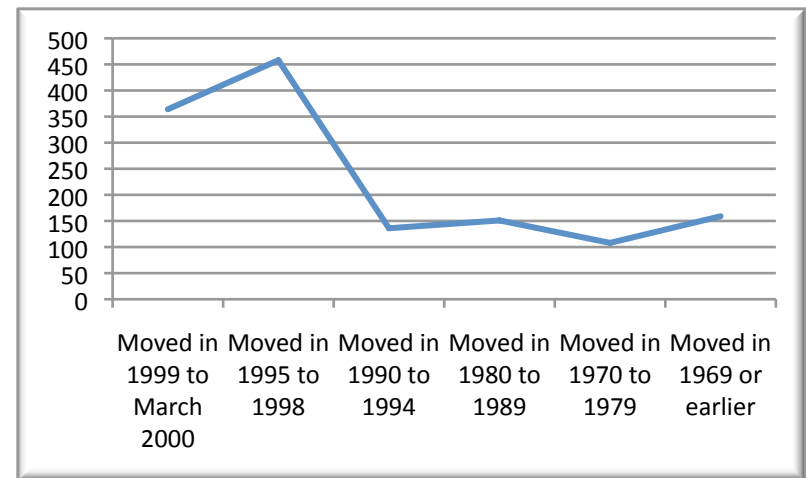


Figure 7: Number of Householders Who Moved into Barelvas during the noted timeframes, 2000 Census

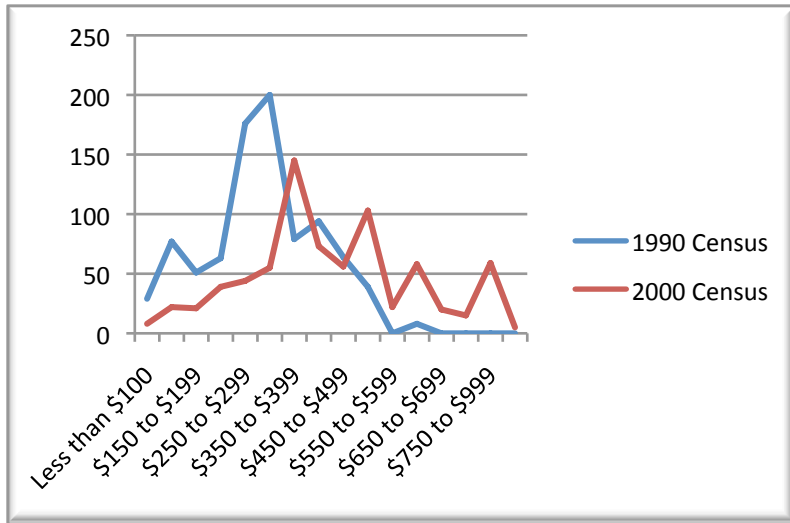


Figure 8: Numbers of renters paying various rents in Barelás, 1990 and 2000

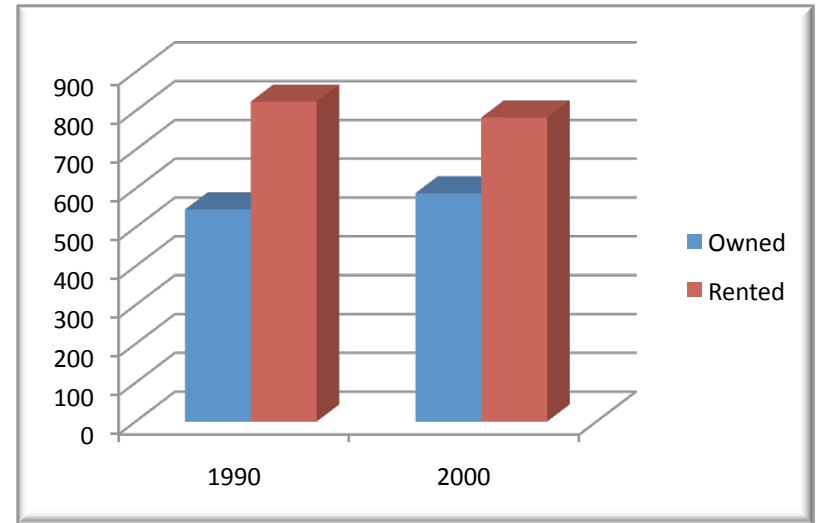


Figure 10: Number of Home Owners in Barelás compared to Renters

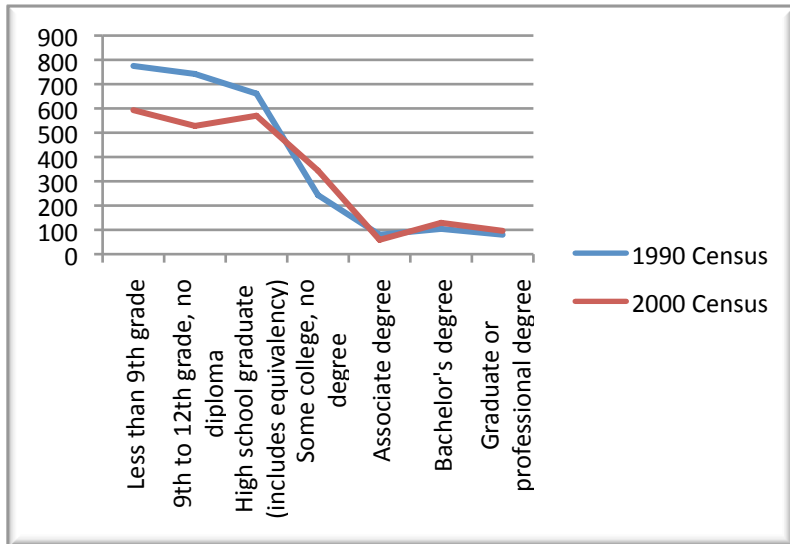


Figure 9: Educational Attainment in Barelás, 1990 and 2000

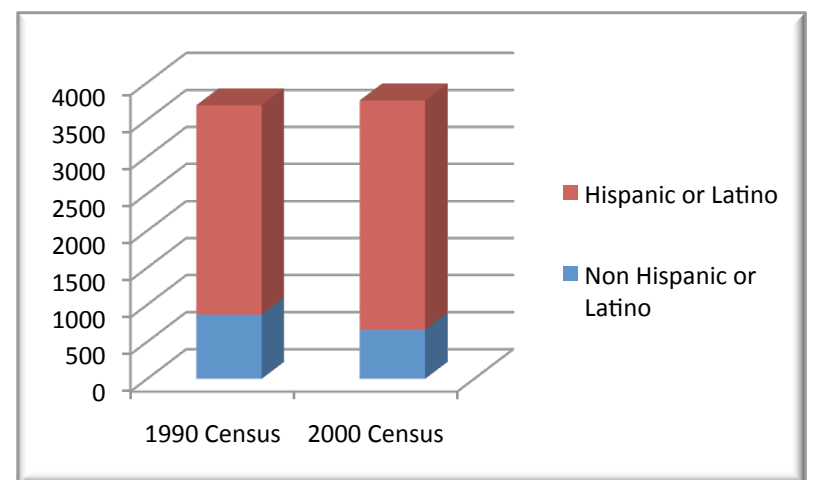


Figure 11: Barelás Population by Latino and Non-Latino

Explicit trends of gentrification are most evident in the neighborhood's changing incomes (Figure 3), number of residents who moved into the neighborhood in the late 90s (Figure 6), and increasing costs of rent (Figure 7). It will also help to add a third point of reference for each chart by adding the 2010 Census Data, once available. Freeman's discussion about a "smoking gun" existing not in residents being displaced by increasing property assessments but rather by the inability of their family members to transfer to other housing in the neighborhood is made clear by the increasing home values and increases in rent.

In addition, many anecdotal stories are making clear that the neighborhood is changing culturally and that community organizations have their work cut out for them. On various occasions, for example, the neighborhood association has been approached by new residents seeking to expand their front walls beyond what is allowable under the sector plan. Daphne Spain talks about this phenomenon in her description of differing approaches to private wealth amongst existing residents and newcomers.

Spain also describes an interesting tendency of "come here's" to consider themselves pioneers, setting out to cultivate the roughness and savagery of a historic and relatively impoverished neighborhood like Barelas. That tendency seemed apparent in a recent real estate advertisement that encouraged possible purchasers to "Descend from Downtown ABQ to Barelas." Though it might not have been the agent's explicit intention, the sentiment seems to resonate with Spain's understanding of the framing in which gentrification often takes place.

Finally, Galster and Boonza, studied the trend of what they called "bipolarism" in neighborhoods which are rapidly becoming stratified income-wise, resource-wise, education-wise, and so on.

Although the trend doesn't seem immediately apparent in the various characteristics looked at in Barelas, such a trend would certainly be accelerated by new development and investment surrounding the neighborhood's real estate market, made more attractive by the Rail Yard re-development. It will be interesting to compare the 2010 Census Data to their theory and also utilize the data as a baseline for the significant changes that are likely to come with the development.



Some of the neighborhood's newer townhomes juxtaposed a more typical Barelas "shotgun" style row house

All told, the Barelas Neighborhood is at a crossroads. Within weeks of a press conference announcing the selected master developer of the Rail Yard property (Samitaur), neighbors witnessed a new influx of "for sale" signs and realtor "open houses" in which homes in Barelas were marketed utilizing investment potential as a marketing point. In a similar manner, the property sought by the neighborhood for a community garden on 7th Street was originally appraised at \$12,000, but in late March of 2011, reappraised at \$70,000.

Barelas community organizers seeking to defend the neighborhood from gentrification are up against nothing less than the strength of market forces. For decades, increasing numbers of Bareleños have been faced with decisions about whether to sell, rent, or remain in their homes in the neighborhood. Increasingly, they will be offered more and more money to leave – and in cases where their children hope to move into other houses in the neighborhood, rising prices and rental costs will simply be beyond their means. The neighborhood’s organizations are faced with the challenge of overcoming market forces and revitalizing the neighborhood’s sense of place in a way that drives families to want to stay and that also provides opportunities for their children to stay in the neighborhood if they desire to do so.

The following section examines the work of community organizations in Barelas and narrates many of their efforts to defend the “Heart of Aztlan” against trends of gentrification that will forever change the neighborhood. The section is followed by a listing of strategies and recommendations, made clear by a matrix demonstrating the work’s impact on the gentrification trends identified earlier in the paper.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN BARELAS



Leadership of the Barelas Neighborhood Association and Community Coalition at a community meeting in 2010.

The remainder of this paper will examine the neighborhood’s work to tackle the state of flux and the growing forces of gentrification by the Barelas Neighborhood Association (BNA) and the more recently formed Barelas Community Coalition (BCC), a subsidiary of the BNA which was formed as a non-profit c(3) organization to focus on shaping the Rail Yard redevelopment. Around 2005, neighborhood leaders were successful in securing legislative support for the BCC’s work around the Rail Yard planning and later key funding was also secured by funders like the McCune Foundation. As a result, the organization hired a full-time community organizer who assists both the BNA and the BCC with their community development work in Barelas. Approximately a dozen people populate each organization’s board with many of them serving on both boards.

The capacity of the two organizations includes many years of history in the neighborhood, community organizing experience, architectural experience, planning background, and non-profit service.



Barelas neighbors constructing a community garden next door to the neighborhood senior center and community center.

The cohesiveness of the current neighborhood leadership has not always been the case, however, as organizational leadership in Barelas has gone through various “derivatives” in recent years. In one particular instance, BNA and BCC leaders often clashed with the former Barelas Community Development Corporation (CDC), an organization led by former County Commissioner Al Valdez, which according to city documents, had drawn down close to \$2 million of city funding over its decade of existence (CABQ Legistorm, 2010). At the end of those years, however, one of the organization’s only products remained a vacant single-family house built on Pacific Avenue for sale at

market rate according to a posted real estate sign. In addition several years ago, the CDC completed a series of residential fences at properties around the neighborhood, yet built the fences contrary to city code. Owners of those fences were frequently cited and fined for the work done by the organization. Though the organization was de-funded by a new mayoral administration in 2010, the damage done by years of neighborhood concern over the organization’s accountability took its toll. Today many residents remain wary of the lack of accountability and failure to deliver on promises left by previous organizations like the CDC.

For that reason, BNA and BCC leaders feel an added level of accountability and responsibility for delivering on the projects they’ve initiated in the neighborhood. As one neighborhood leader Ron Romero frequently states, “a big part of community organizing is the product that is delivered to the community.” In other words, though the two organizations have made significant strides in recent years, the internal pressure is for leaders of the BNA and BCC to be able to look back 10 years from now and to



Streetscape at a bus stop near Sacred Heart Church on 4th Street.

be able to point to a slew of tangible products delivered to Barelas in ways that strengthen the neighborhood and fend off the types of changes that would have compromised the neighborhood's invaluable character and sense of place.

In 2008, the community underwent a “sector development” planning process and re-drafted the Barelas Sector Development Plan which had not been updated in decades. The plan’s re-do was enabled by Albuquerque City Councilor Isaac Benton, who represents the area, and who understood the plan’s importance to implementing important infrastructure improvements throughout the neighborhood.



Barelas neighbors contributed many hours to editing drafts of the final neighborhood sector development plan, adopted in 2008.

However, just as important to the sector plan’s drafting and approval is the coordination of the political capital to fund the

projects within. Too many sector plans have become documents that “sit on the shelf” and it was up to neighborhood residents to keep pressure on elected officials to coordinate the resources necessary to make the ideas within a reality. Many of the projects discussed throughout this paper are identified within the 2008 Barelas Sector Development Plan. As mentioned, implementation is a much different story, necessitating special attention placed on resource allocation and follow-through.

Still, with the help of their community organizer, Danie Gutierrez, the BNA and the BCC are beginning to take on many of these projects and plan to see them through to fruition. What follows is both a description of the issues identified as critical and priority by neighborhood leaders in the two organizations, as well as strategies being employed to address those challenges head on. Margaret Mead once said to “never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people [could] change the world,” because “indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” In that sense, the BNA and the BCC are very much a committed and thoughtful group of volunteers who, along with their organizer, are beginning to make a notable difference in overcoming the distress facing Barelas, our revered “Heart of Aztlan.”

The following matrix synthesizes the measures being taken by the neighborhood to address various gentrification trends identified through the literature review, case studies, and demographic profile of Barelas. It separates those measures into five categories (rows) and also in four columns, outlines the element of gentrification identified, indicators of the trend in Barelas, and matches those indicators with the neighborhood’s assets, capacity and recommended implementation. A “Kellogg Logic Model” is presented toward the end of the paper to help with the evaluation of the various tasks suggested by the matrix.

	Elements of Gentrification	Indicators in Barelás
Organization Building	Disengagement in community organizations	Barelás CDC and absence of product / outcomes, conflicts
	Social capital disparities	low-participation in orgs, wall regulation exemption apps
	Closing businesses	Vacancies along 4th Street
	"Urban Pioneer" frame	Realtor marketing strategies
Community Amenities	Disinvestment	Crumbling infrastructure
	increasing investment by political interests	8th Street, 2nd and 3rd Street, Tingley Drive, Tingley Park
	Zoning exemptions/subdivisions	Wall reg / Sudivision Inquiries to BNA
Housing	Devalorization cycle	58% of houses built before 1959
	Displacement (i.e. property taxes)	Removal of "Tortilla Flats"
	Displacement because of rising rent and housing prices	Housing Unit Value Increases, census data and 50% rental rate
	Arrival of "upwardly mobile" residents	2000 Census Householder data who moved into Barelás data
Railyards	Large-scale public-private development	ABQ Rail Yard redevelopment
	"consumerism authenticity"	demise of existing businesses
Beyond Physical	"bipolarism' in income and educational attainment	undetermined
	increasing investment by political interests	8th Street, 2nd and 3rd Street, Tingley Drive, Tingley Park

Assets and Capacity	implementation
Community organizer, partners like Encuentro	Build capacity through fundraising and organizing
Existing networks (i.e. Sacred Heart), newsletters, etc.	Community garden & other tangible projects
Local businesses and history of merchants association	Re-establishment of 4th Street Merchants Association
Rich history as "Heart of Aztlan"	Community cleanups and neighborly support
Strong political capital with elected officials	Strengthen Sense of Place
Responsiveness from local elected officials	See projects through to fruition
2008 Sector Development Plan Update	Reinforce Sector Plan's guidance of community design
Some rehab experience on board partnership possibilities	Capitalize housing rehabilitation program
Strong network of established Bareleño families and elders	Property Tax Caps, Weatherization support
7th and Iron, partnership with SCLT, WHOA & McCune subsidies	Land trust, inclusionary zoning & home ownership counseling
Strong history as a working class neighborhood	Inclusionary zoning
Buy-in of Rail Yard Advisory Board and Rail Yard developers	CBA / TIF
existing grocery stores and businesses	Buy local campaign and consumer survey
AHCC Programs, YCC, scholarships	Workforce Training, networking
Responsiveness from local elected officials	engage neighbors in tangible projects

EFFORTS TO DEFEND THE HEART OF AZTLAN

In recent years, Barelas residents have leveraged the Barelas Neighborhood Association (BNA) and the Barelas Community Coalition (BCC) to combat the gentrification pressures faced by the community and to strengthen the neighborhood in preparation for impending changes to come. This section will outline some of those efforts, provide research and data that supports their cause, and conclude each strategy with further recommendations. Until the Spring of 2011, many of these efforts had taken place in a volunteer nature and through the work of the community's sole organizer. In March, however, the community received outstanding news that the Kellogg Foundation was to become a major funder of their work, beginning with a \$100,000 grant to be expended between April 2011 and April 2012. With

the Kellogg Foundation and other supporters understanding the timeliness of the investment, this section will attempt to bolster the efforts of the neighborhood as an added resource emphasizing the urgency of their work. The section will conclude with the provision of a Kellogg Logic Model template for suggested implementation by the neighborhood in their strategic planning.

Organization Building

The BNA and the BCC have worked hard in recent years to advance community development projects while simultaneously building the organization and its resonance in the neighborhood. Typically only one or two dozen people participate in each meeting, although the two organizations have held events (i.e. the annual Posadas, mobile food banks and the 7th and Iron block party) that attracted hundreds of neighbors. Still, as the designated representative organization of the community, neighborhood leaders feel a responsibility to be in frequent contact with neighbors, making each organization accessible to those interested in strengthening the neighborhood.

As presented in the literature review, social capital is an important part of a community's strength, whether it be in neighbors' willingness to get involved in community projects or in their visible presence on their front porch during evenings (as opposed to putting up an opaque wall all around their property). With the number of older families in the neighborhood, many have been involved in neighborhood activities at some point or another but in many cases have gotten burned out or have lost faith in the neighborhood's ability to get things done. Organizational leaders have a challenge, then, to win people back into collective efforts to make a difference in Barelas.

To accomplish this priority, neighborhood leaders have created a neighborhood newsletter, El Bareño, which highlights projects being worked upon by each organization. The Kellogg Foundation grant budget includes funding for printing and of the newsletter. In the latest edition, neighborhood leaders sought to print 1,600 copies, enough to cover every household in the neighborhood.



Barelas neighbors are utilizing the community newsletter, "El Bareño," to engage the community in neighborhood work.

With the help of the Kellogg Foundation funding support, the newsletter will play an important role in the community's organizing efforts. Kellogg's model, which is "place-based," seeks to invest significant resources into communities like Barelás. On a recent site-visit to the neighborhood, a program officer from Kellogg was impressed with the number of projects being worked upon by the two organizations – a strong fit for Kellogg's model of engaging in community work holistically.

Organization Building Recommendations:

A door-knocking strategy can help organize Barelás neighborhood leaders to distribute information about the BNA/BCC's projects via the newsletter, to collect contact information for outreach purposes, and to listen to the concern of residents who aren't able to participate regularly.

To help alleviate the workload of communicating with the neighborhood of Barelás' 1,600 households, neighborhood leaders can divide up the walk lists recently created by the Center for Civic Policy, which includes both property owners and registered voters throughout the neighborhood. The lists are divided into 12 different geographical areas throughout Barelás, which neighborhood leaders have found to require 1-2 hours for flyering and a few hours per "knock-and-talk."

Engaging these ongoing lists in any outreach completed by the organizations will also allow them to record key points in conversations with residents and to keep track of any requests for help from the BNA / BCC with issues facing local residents.

Alinsky-style organizer training can help Barelás community members to develop compelling stories that build people power

and help the neighborhood hold elected officials accountable for the improvements and investments that the community deserves.

An Asset-Mapping approach can help bring together the community's many existing resources, including established networks in Sacred Heart Church, the Senior Center, the area's schools, and so on.

A common community project matrix and timeline brought to each neighborhood meeting can help keep neighborhood leaders on task and accountable to achieving real results for the neighborhood with each month that passes.

Organized activities like the community garden being built for completion in early 2011 have the chance to bring neighbors together in a way that strengthens the neighborhood's sense of place. Confronting gentrification means taking on market forces, and so neighbors are faced with the challenge of retaining the things which Barelenses love about the neighborhood so that their neighbors are less likely to leave or sell off their stake in Barelás for financial reasons.

Given the rushed calendar under which the Barelás Community Coalition must expend the Kellogg grant, a strategic planning is essential for engaging the neighborhood in vital projects like the Rail Yard Community Benefits Agreement.

Community leaders should set benchmarks for community engagement, as well as ways to evaluate the organization's progress in those efforts.

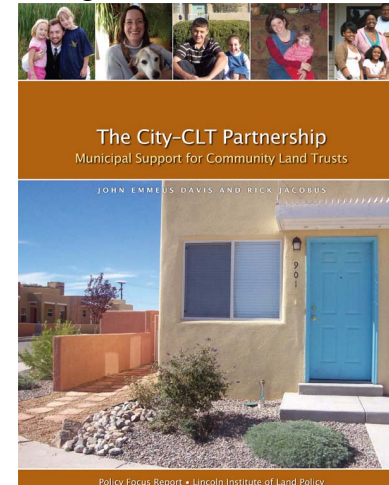
Housing

As noted in the review of literature, gentrification is visible through the devalorization of properties like the 58% of houses in Barelmas built before 1959 and in the displacement of neighbors through redevelopments such as the removal of the “Tortilla Flats.” With the arrival of “upwardly mobile” newcomers and rises in rent and property values, Bareleños will find it increasingly difficult for their family members to transfer to other housing in the neighborhood.

Therefore, one key strategy in strengthening Barelmas in the face of looming changes like the Rail Yard re-development, is in ensuring that permanently affordable housing remains accessible to local residents. Workforce housing is unquestionably in demand in Barelmas, as well as elsewhere in Albuquerque. As cited in the Urban Land Institute’s study of local housing demands, “the median income for all households in the city in 2006 was \$43,021. To afford a two bedroom, one-bathroom apartment at \$585 per month, a household would need an annual income of at least \$25,000. More than 57,000 Albuquerque households have incomes below that level” (ULI, 2007). Some prominent affordable housing is being developed elsewhere in nearby downtown, albeit mostly north of Coal Avenue. One of those developments includes 120 workforce housing units and 72 other market rate units on the old Greyhound site just west of the southern edge of the Alvarado Transportation Center (ULI, 2007).

Affordable housing in the aforementioned properties has been accomplished through public subsidies and “soft-second” mortgages. Permanently affordable housing, on the other hand, has only been accomplished in Sawmill’s Community Land Trust. There, an added strategy of providing affordable housing particularly to families of the established neighborhood was accomplished through giving extra points to applicants whose

families had come from the older neighborhood. The vision for the 7th and Iron housing project is to provide 4-8 stand-alone houses or what was once a crime-magnet property – effectively providing 4-8 Barelmas families with the chance to live with more stability and the ability to invest in their house’s worth. The land, which remains “in trust,” however, does not speculate and is kept accessible for existing families.



One of Barelmas’ key allies has been the Sawmill Community Land Trust, a successful local model of permanently affordable housing.

One essential component of permanently affordable housing is the work of community activists to recruit the families of existing Barelmas families to return to or expand into the new housing. Otherwise, new housing development, though affordable can help accelerate the changing character of the neighborhood rather than providing opportunities for Bareleños to sustain themselves in the neighborhood. In Barelmas, this is being attempted through the distribution of flyers to neighborhood households through a sign that notifies neighbors of the housing’s accessibility, and through more aggressive recruitment as the housing is completed.

In 2007, with the help of research funding from the New Mexico State Legislature, a group of Barelas neighbors traveled to Rochester, Minnesota, to meet with members of the community land trusts in the area and to explore the complexities of establishing their own land trust organization in Barelas. The conference was an eye-opening experience for those who attended, revealing the difficulty of maintaining a land trust and the capital necessary for holding and revolving mortgages. One of the programs in the area had been established to provide more affordable housing to employees of the nearby Mayo Clinic, using existing housing stock. The complexities with purchasing houses and their liabilities while improvements were made were the most daunting challenges identified by Barelas neighbors.

Upon returning, the trip reinforced the direction of the Barelas Community Coalition's desire to partner with the Sawmill Community Land Trust rather than "reinvent the wheel." Sawmill had established the technical expertise to develop permanently affordable housing but since its inception had been focused on the single, congruent land just north of Albuquerque's Old Town. The challenge would be in Sawmill's willingness to expand beyond those borders into a second neighborhood. In 2008, the SCLT board voted in favor of expanding into other Albuquerque neighborhoods where permanently affordable housing was needed. In addition, Barelas residents urged the organization to consider housing rehabilitation in addition to new housing development.

Recommendations on Housing in the Heart of Aztlán

Though both the BNA and the BCC are working diligently to create permanently affordable housing, beginning in the 7th and Iron space, the impending impact of large-scale projects like the Rail Yard Development reveal the urgency of a more aggressive pace. One opportunity is to create a Community Benefit Agreement

with the developer of the Rail Yards and a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. A TIF district could be designated for the Rail Yard property alone or including the surrounding area, with a baseline taken of the tax revenue prior to the development and a portion of the added revenue committed to a fund designated by the local government. Possible recipients of that funding could include a housing trust fund or a program for rehabilitating existing housing in the neighborhood. Significant technical expertise is necessary to move those kinds of programs forward and efficiently.

In 2007 the City of Albuquerque approved a Workforce Housing Act that includes a capital bond dedicated to the funding of workforce housing. Barelas leaders should pursue the support of affordable housing projects for Barelas families throughout the community with the workforce housing funding support.

Though new permanently affordable housing is one strategy for stabilizing the neighborhood, an equally as important strategy is in rehabilitating the existing houses of Barelas families with programs such as weatherization. Weatherization has a significant impact on poorer and working families whose incomes are disproportionately affected by rises in energy costs and property values. Groups like Rebuilding Together Albuquerque and the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority carry out these kinds of rehabilitation projects through subsidies and donations.

Recently neighbors have learned that many housing rehabilitation needs in Barelas are more significant than simple weatherization so capitalizing a rehabilitation program is a definite need. Creating such a program is complex, however, and the community should look to Kellogg for technical assistance in that direction.

Barelas residents should work closely with “friendly” developers who have built other affordable housing projects around the City of Albuquerque and who know the requirements for seeing projects through to fruition.

In addition to the neighborhood’s efforts to establish its own permanently affordable housing projects, city-wide policy advocacy might include “inclusionary zoning,” in which new developments are required to have segments of affordable housing for every market-based unit that they build.

Community Amenities and Quality of Life

In 2008, the Albuquerque City Council approved a revision of the Barelas Sector Development Plan, last revised in 1993. The plan makes a slew of recommendations for community development improvements in Barelas and also locks in place many zoning regulations that neighbors have sought to maintain the neighborhood’s unique character. Sector plans are the basic building block of community design guidelines and unlike more regional area and comprehensive plans, are the go-to document when it comes to zoning regulations in each respective community. In addition, the 2008 Barelas Sector Development Plan contains an implementation section which contains recommendations for various community development projects and strategies in Barelas.



In 2008, Barelas neighbors constructed this neighborhood sign.

As discussed earlier, the challenge to the implementation of any sector development plan is the political capital to see the plan’s vision through to reality. In an ideal circumstance, political leaders rally around the completed document and strive to bring together the resources to implement the projects envisioned within. As is clear in today’s economy, nevertheless, adequate resources

are another challenge. With minimal capital improvements likely to be approved at the state level, community leaders will likely be required to fight for the inclusion of their prioritized projects in City capital obligation bonds to be approved by city voters. In addition, other avenues of funding are viable through foundation funding, including foundations like McCune and Kellogg. It is also quite possible that some projects could be made possible through in-kind contributions and “people power” rather than funding resources alone.

Still, in her 2007 presentation to the neighborhood, Dr. Teresa Córdova cautioned about the importance of advancing revitalization without gentrification (Córdova, 2007). In her advice, she listed factors that, if left out, could result in community improvements that might only exacerbate the neighborhood’s gentrification. Córdova listed factors including preserving a clear community identity and protecting a cultural landscape.

The BNA and BCC are currently working on several small-scale community amenity improvements aimed at advancing the neighborhood’s quality of life cultural landscape. Though small in scale compared to larger projects like the Rail Yards, these projects stand to make significant contributions to community pride and a sense that positive things are happening in the neighborhood. Several years ago, for example, neighborhood leaders negotiated a small space on the corner of 8th and Atlantic for the installation of a small neighborhood sign which is both aesthetically pleasing for passers-by, as well as informative to the neighborhood about upcoming meetings and events.

Neighborhood leaders envision additional gateways at each entrance to the neighborhood, including at the corner of 8th and Avenida Cesar Chavez (the residential entrance to the neighborhood, versus the commercial entrance which is on 4th

Street). A similar gateway to the one envisioned by neighbors exists at the entrance to the Whittier neighborhood in East Los Angeles. New Mexico Historic Preservation funding provides avenues to New Mexican neighborhoods looking to accomplish such projects.

Neighborhood leaders were also able to achieve funding for a pedestrian bridge to cross the irrigation ditch (the Albuquerque Riverside Drain) running alongside Tingley Drive and separating the community from the Rio Grande Bosque for nearly a mile. Several amenities were added along Tingley Beach to the south of the neighborhood, along the nearby Country Club (Huning Castle neighborhood, but those amenities ended at Barelás’ boundaries.



In 2010, UNM graduate students assisted Barelás neighbors with these depictions of a proposed pedestrian bridge at Santa Fe Street

The funding sought was appropriated by City Councilor Isaac Benton, in the amount of \$80,000, in 2009. However, the project has since become mired down by City of Albuquerque engineering analyses. In early 2011, Barelás leaders were still awaiting an approved contract for the design of the bridge, in hopes that enough funding would still remain in the fund for the sake of building the bridge.

As of early 2011, the prioritized site for the pedestrian bridge was Santa Fe Avenue, the most central north/south street along the Albuquerque Riverside Drain and an appropriate east/west axis as well. The City of Albuquerque also owns the easement at the end of the street. The challenges with any pedestrian bridge being built in the area, however, involved making the bridge compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, particularly in climbing the hill between the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District's east side maintenance road and Tingley Drive. Other challenges include required penetrations of the established levee for building the bridge's foundation. In a September 21, 2010 memo, the City's hired consultant, HDR, recommended Santa Fe as the preferred site, as opposed to sites at Pacific and at the Albuquerque Zoo, and suggested making improvements to the East Side Maintenance Road as well.



This property, located at 7th and Barelas could easily be a pocket park with minimal capital implementation requirements.

Elsewhere in the neighborhood, small “opportunity sites” exist where small community amenities could be developed. A small triangle space at the corner of 7th and Barelas, for example, could be developed into a small “pocket park” with a park bench,

landscaping and some kind of artistic or historic attribute designed by surrounding neighbors.

Such projects require minimal capital investments and have been made possible elsewhere in the region, as demonstrated by the research of Moises Gonzales at the University of New Mexico (Gonzales, 2010). Through overlaying images of such spaces Gonzales was able to demonstrate the various projects that would be possible with minimal investment and labor by the community. Some of the obstacles that impede these kinds of projects are the ownership of the land sought, as well as the required maintenance going forward and the City's unwillingness to encumber responsibility over such properties.

In a similar situation, community members are currently “squatting” on a piece of 6,000 square foot property located across 7th Street from the Barelás Senior Center and constructing a senior focused community garden. The lot, which is a standard residential-size lot, has been vacant for decades and through research, Barelás leaders have learned that the property's owner passed away without any known heirs eligible to take ownership. Given the most certain likelihood that the property will continue to remain vacant and given a community garden's minimal impact to the lot, Barelás leaders secured a grant from Bernalillo County to fund the project's build-out. The property includes optimal sunlight access and close proximity to community pedestrian traffic.

If achieved, the garden will include a temporary greenhouse and raised beds, allowing seniors from the Barelás Senior Center to spend time in the garden. The project's leaders also envision a mentorship program with young people from the nearby Barelás Community Center and surrounding schools in the long-run. Possible use of the plot could include the growing of

vegetables, herbs, ornamentals and fruit and nut trees, each utilizing drip irrigation and composting season after season.



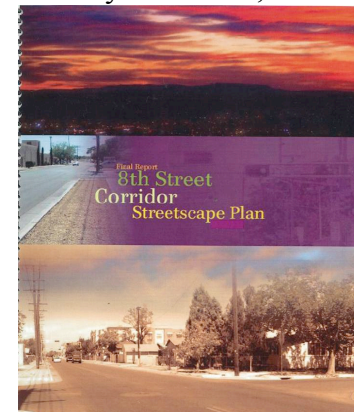
When various lots throughout metropolitan Detroit went undeveloped, local residents squatted on the properties with community gardens.

Similar work has taken place all across the City of Detroit, Michigan, where, following the severe economic downturn, many resident organizations decided to take back control of abandoned sites to build community gardens. With many of those sites tied up in the financial crisis, no clear ownership of the lots existed. However, with more immediate needs of hunger and community revitalization at hand, residents decided to run the risk of squatting on the land and more often than not, were left alone to farm the land. Barelas residents hope to turn what has been a vacant lot into a “productive, communal and educational space that will benefit all Barelas residents” (Markwell, 1).

Residents of Barelas have also been successful in winning public official support for projects to improve community

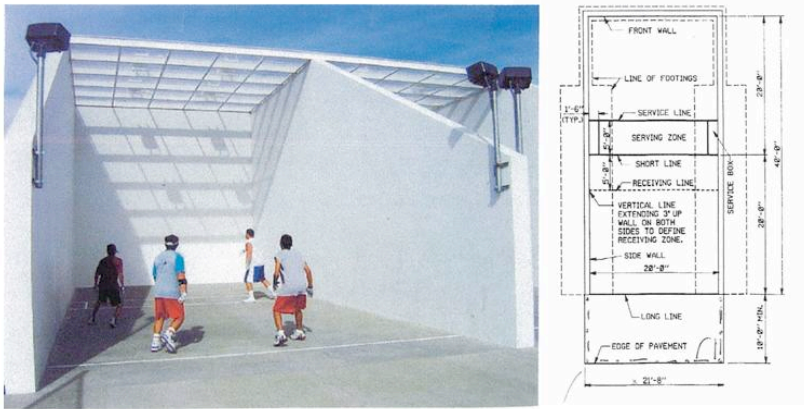
infrastructure in Barelas, most particularly in the streetscapes and designs of major streets like 2nd, 3rd, and 8th Streets. For many years, residents had expressed concern about speeding traffic along 2nd and 3rd Street, both of which were set up as one-way streets providing “straight-away drag-strips” for vehicles to travel between Downtown Albuquerque and Avenida Cesar Chavez. With the help of City Councilor Isaac Benton, re-configuration began in October of 2009 and has changed most of the two streets to two-ways. With narrower lanes and two-way traffic in place, traffic is expected to slow down significantly.

8th Street is the main residential thoroughfare through Barelas (the main commercial strip is 4th Street), but residents have long had to deal with commuters into Downtown Albuquerque using 8th Street for commuter traffic. To address the problem, various elected officials including City Councilor Isaac Benton, Senators Eric Griego and Jerry Ortiz y Pino and Representative Miguel Garcia have been working to compile funding to re-design the streetscape. Although the completed streetscape would require millions of dollars to be implemented in full, the project was designed to be phased-in by Jim Daisa, a streetscape planner.



With the help of local and state elected officials, funding has been coordinated to improve 8th Street.

Incorporating resident input, the plan seeks to include traffic calming methods as well as improvements for pedestrian and bicycling through Barelás (Daisa, 2008). The plan was completed in 2009 and as of late-Fall 2010, the funding had been achieved in full. An engineer was scheduled to be hired to begin implementing the construction of the 8th Street Corridor Streetscape Plan in early 2011.



One constant node of activity is the community center’s handball wall, set for improvements in early 2011.

Smaller project advancements continue to contribute to the neighborhood’s unique character, including the installation of new City of Albuquerque bus stops along 8th Street, as well as improvements slated to be made to the Barelás Community Center’s Hand-Ball Courts. The highly-used hand ball courts, reminiscent of those utilized in detention facilities, are an amenity unique to Barelás. Each evening and often on weekends, the courts attract dozens of inter-generational players, and unbeknownst to passers-by on 8th Street, include competitive players that advance to regional competitions beyond New Mexico. For that reason, in late 2010, the City of Albuquerque’s Department of Municipal Development and Parks Department has secured funding to

improve the courts’ security and quality. Neighborhood leader encouraged the City to work with nearby neighbors whose houses back up against the courts, to ensure that their security concerns were addressed first and foremost.

Recommendations for Community Amenities & Quality of Life

The projects mentioned in this section have the potential to contribute to the quality of life for existing Barelás families, but they can also play a role in accelerating gentrification in the neighborhood by making it more attractive to others looking to move in. It would be unfair to under-serve the neighborhood for that reason, but the BNA/BCC need to accompany their community amenity improvements with efforts to keep families in the neighborhood. By providing support to keep housing accessible and affordable for existing residents, and by strengthening the neighborhood’s sense of place, they can help lessen the financial and disenfranchisement burdens that cause families to decide to leave.

Given the limited resources available via state appropriations neighborhood leaders should work closely with their City Councilor to insert key projects into the City’s Capital Plan. As of late 2010, neighbors were exploring the possibility of including improvements along Tingley Drive, between the Albuquerque Zoo and the National Hispanic Cultural Center, in the Capital Improvement bond package upon which City voters would vote in October, 2011.

Small projects like those demonstrated by the work of Moise Gonzales, require little capital investment, but can yield good will in the community by demonstrating results for community members beyond the newsletter and community announcements.

Neighborhood leaders should utilize the door-to-door strategy to identify potential projects upon which there is real community engagement.

Beyond the physical: Community Support / Outreach

Galster and Boonza highlighted a characteristic of “bi-polarism” in which gentrified neighborhoods developed into stratified systems of opportunity, access to resources, and support. To ensure that its existing families are not left behind and that despite disparities in income or educational attainment, Barelas neighbors have an opportunity to improve one another’s quality of life through community development “beyond the physical.” Possible efforts include workforce training through the Barelas Economic Opportunity Center, as well as partnerships with the Youth Conservation Corps for employing young Bareleños. In another example, the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce connects young people with scholarships to finance their higher education. Neighborhood leaders should take care to connect young students in Barelas with those kinds of opportunities.

In addition to physical community improvements sought out by Barelas community leaders, it is important to recognize the value of the community-building that goes on via the unique culture, tradition and celebrations in Barelas. The “Posadas de Barelas” are a perfect example, and involve the annual reproduction of the Mary and Joseph’s search for a shelter in which to give birth to Baby Jesus. The tradition is in its 65th year in 2010 in Barelas and attracts hundreds of visitors from all around the region each Christmas Season. The procession also includes various houses of different Barelas families along the way culminating at the Barelas community center with a sizeable community celebration. In addition the annual Fiestas at Sacred Heart Church take place each summer, also attracting several hundred Barelas residents together for an annual celebration. Barelas community leaders have hosted a table at the event each year and are often visited by residents who have moved away, yet come back to the fiestas each year to see friends and family.



In 2011, the Barelitas Posadas were in their 65th year of production.

In addition, the Barelitas Neighborhood Association has tried to address some of the community's more immediate needs through activities such as their mobile food bank. In partnership with the Roadrunner Food Bank of Albuquerque, the neighborhood association is able to pay a nominal fee to Roadrunner for the delivery of nearly a semi-truck load of food, which they then distribute at the community center to families around the community. Over the course of the past few years, between 75 and 300 families have shown up to participate and are provided with bags of groceries to take home. Although neighborhood leaders ask for some form of proof that participants live in Barelitas, other participants have been allowed to partake as well, once Barelitas families are served. Leftover food is often provided to the Brothers of the Good Shepherd, who often send volunteers to help with the loading and unloading of the truck.

Neighborhood leaders have also tried to strengthen the neighborhood by assisting residents, particularly the elderly, with community clean-ups. On various occasions throughout the year, neighborhood leaders recruit participants to help clean-up trash in

neighborhood streets and will often provide supplies such as trash bags, gloves, and coffee and pastries.



Barelitas volunteers assist with a community cleanup

In addition, neighborhood leaders have recently practiced converging upon the properties of certain elderly or disabled residents who have requested help with their yards. In all, these types of activities help to beautify the neighborhood, as well as assist those who are unable to spend time doing a great deal of physical work around their properties.

One admitted omission in recent years by the BNA and the BCC has been the absence of any strong focus on crime prevention in the neighborhood. Although certain blocks have organized informal neighborhood watches in response to problematic properties (i.e at 4th and Hazeldine), the organizations as a whole have spent less time in comparison to previous decades, when the neighborhood association would organize high-profile anti-crime marches to confront crime-magnet properties. Instead, BNA meetings continue to include a monthly police report and an opportunity for residents to interact with police leadership, but the current approach is less reactionary and more targeted at long-term

community development solutions that will lessen criminal activity and strengthen the neighborhood's ability to confront criminal activity resulting from poverty, substance abuse, and so on.

Recommendations on beyond the physical: community support / outreach:

Neighborhood leaders should create a more predictable community calendar that includes regular food banks, community clean-ups, neighborhood association meetings, community coalition meetings, neighborhood watch meetings, etc. Doing so would make participation more accessible to those interested.

The City of Albuquerque encourages the coordination of neighborhood watch-groups and offers many resources to such efforts. Beginning with the 4th and Hazeldine neighborhood watch group as a model, neighborhood leaders should help facilitate the organization of such groups, with an emphasis on supporting existing families, rather than placing them under added stress.

Archiving the neighborhood's collective work to improve the quality of life for Bareleños is an important part of the neighborhood's efforts over the years. The neighborhood website is a good opportunity for doing so, as well as the community newsletters and office space, when secured.

Partnerships

Rather than attempting to do all of the work on their own however, many opportunities exist for the Barelas Neighborhood Association and Barelas Community Coalition to partner with other non-profit organizations in the area to improve the quality of life for Barelas residents. One example is the Immigrant Resource Center that just located on 4th Street just north of Stover. Prior to their arrival, the BNA/BCC had sought office space in a vacant building at the corner of 4th and Lead and had discussed the types of resources they wanted to house in the building. One commonly shared idea involved the housing of an immigrant advocacy service, given the neighborhood's significant number of immigrant residents.



The Plaza del Encuentro is a remarkable resource for immigrant families in Barelas.

Soon thereafter, members of the Immigrant Resource Center announced their budding partnership between El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos (immigrant rights advocacy), Southwest Creations (womens' business collaborative), and Enlace Comunitario (domestic violence prevention) and their intention to locate in the property just north of Sacred Heart Church. Member:

of the BNA/BCC enthusiastically expressed their support for the project and helped with the center's building rehabilitation and opening in the Spring of 2009. Since its opening, the Center has been an incredible resource to the immigrant community in Barelás and beyond.

One other example of a possible partnership is with an organization called "Rebuilding Together Albuquerque," a 501c(3) non-profit organization which assists low-income, elderly and disabled homeowners with home rehabs and repairs. The organization is almost entirely volunteer but brings together resources necessary to help such residents stay in their homes and live more safely and comfortably. They currently strive to rehabilitate 10-15 houses per year and are particularly interested in doing such work in largely low-income neighborhoods like Barelás. Applicants must meet certain income guidelines, but Rebuilding Together expresses its interest in working with the impacted community to design their own eligibility guidelines. In Barelás, it would seem to make sense that the focus be placed on existing families who have lived in the neighborhood for many years.

One other possible partnership might be with the Youth Conservation Corps, which has a strong history in communities like Bernalillo, New Mexico, of rehabilitating historic properties and restoring them for public use. Various properties throughout Barelás are in need of such revitalization – including buildings on the Rail Yard site and also at 4th and Coal. Such a project would ideally employ youth from the community as well. In the same vein, the ACE Leadership High School, a recent charter high school that is getting its start in the Sawmill neighborhood and training future architects, construction workers and engineers in the building trades of tomorrow. The school's students will be looking for hands-on experimental projects and school leaders

have expressed interest in working with the community of Barelás to either locate the school permanently in Barelás or engage in partnerships with the neighborhood to apply the students' training to real-world outcomes.

With many community amenities surrounding the neighborhood, including the National Hispanic Cultural Center, the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, and the Albuquerque Biopark, neighborhood leaders need to not only partner with the aforementioned entities, but also insist that they engage with the community given their public interests and location nearby.

Recommendations for Partnerships

As suggested previously, an asset-based analysis of the neighborhood would take into account the tremendous network and support systems that already exist in the neighborhood for the sake of working together with all existing efforts in Barelás, rather than reinventing the wheel.

More regular communication and cooperation should take place with existing entities like the National Hispanic Cultural Center, the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, Coronado Elementary School, Dolores Gonzales Elementary School, Sacred Heart Church, the Senior Center and the Community Center.

The Rail Yards

Aside from the work of the BNA and the BCC to strengthen Barelás in light of change all around the neighborhood, perhaps the single greatest impact facing the neighborhood in the near future is the pending re-development of the former Santa Fe Rail Yards site and its historic buildings in Barelás. Since the late 1800s, the towering Rail Yards have served as the backdrop to the community, lining the eastern edge of the neighborhood and visible throughout. At one point, the 27 acre complex served as the economic hub of the City of Albuquerque. As a thriving steam locomotive repair operation it is the largest industrial complex in the area (ULI, p. 7), but became completely dormant in the early 1990s. In addition, the construction of I-25 also contributed to a downturn in Barelás and along 4th Street. For decades, the site has remained vacant, used only as a site for filming from time to time.



Interior of the Rail Yard Machine Shop

In 2007, the City of Albuquerque purchased the Rail Yard site with workforce housing funds, securing part of the site for permanently affordable housing in the purchase agreement. The workforce housing fund had been one of the items approved by city voters to include in bond financing, primarily to be used as a

revolving loan fund for the purchase of sites for the development of affordable housing. The process, known as “land-banking” is a critical component of affordable housing development, given the speculation of land in urban core areas like Barelás.

Following the purchase of the site, the City of Albuquerque appointed a “Rail Yards Advisory Board,” consisting of sixteen various stakeholder appointees with interests in the site’s development. The Board included representatives of the Mayor’s office, the City Council office, the Governor’s office, the respective State Senators and Representatives and County Commission. In addition, the president of the Wheels Museum, a representative of the ULI-NM District Council, a workforce housing developer, and representatives of the Barelás and South Broadway neighborhoods were appointed. The Board began meeting in April, 2009, in order to develop a “Request for Proposals” to be distributed internationally for the sake of identifying a master developer of the site.

BCC President Ron Romero served as Barelás’ appointee to the Board and was actively engaged in each of the Board’s meetings and research in between meetings. From the beginning Barelás leaders sought to help shape the development into a community asset that would strengthen and complement the community while still remaining financially viable. With the help of public investment, surrounding neighbors were granted some voice in how the project was to proceed – and the desire was to see a win-win “return on investment” for both the community and for those willing to risk their finances on the project. Also as a result of the public funds used to secure the property, the public affected by the development was given some input in the “community benefits” that were to be identified in the Request for Proposals.

Other communities around the country that have faced similarly significant redevelopment projects provide good examples of how such expectations can be realized. The Staples Center in Los Angeles and the Century Boulevard redevelopment in Century City, CA included “Community Benefit Agreements” or “Memoranda of Understanding,” which committed the municipality and the developer to achieving measurable positive outcomes for the impacted communities. Possible considerations include agreements upon the types of jobs created within the project and their accessibility to people from the immediate surrounding neighborhoods, the development’s interaction with the surrounding community, and the types of businesses and services provided within the development’s commercial sectors. The broad goal of the residents was to ensure a successful Rail Yard redevelopment project reinforces the assets of the surrounding neighborhoods, rather than accelerating gentrification and making them less stable for existing families there.

Factors working in favor of the community’s desires for the project were an extreme sentiment of corporate accountability and responsibility across our country, lessening the possibility that a massive developer could come in and strong-arm / profiteer the project without some level of expected benefit to the City/surrounding communities. “Smart growth” was also a strong frame locally (as opposed to sprawl development), having helped spur infill housing development downtown in the past few years. That trend also lent added public interest in how this large of a project could be achieved in a balanced way with respect to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Some of the challenges faced in shaping the development are the competing interests about how the Rail Yard site should be developed. Some of this contention has arisen in RYAB meetings, where at least one participant advocated aggressively for the

development to become predominantly a museum and center for tourism. Previous attempts at developing the site privately included the creation of film studios that would have included a tall cinder block around the entire property and other proposals that included industrial manufacturing that was of concern for the surrounding residents.

One strategy for winning the surrounding elected official’s support for working closely with surrounding neighborhoods on the project would be to tap into their desire to see the project “done right” and to leave a legacy of a successful Rail Yard development. In other words, the Rail Yard redevelopment was to be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to create an Albuquerque-style shining development that would strengthen the neighborhood and build buy-in from the affected stakeholders. To impact the RYAB’s developer members, research needs to be conducted on examples of positive developments that have taken place around the country that have allowed those projects to remain financially viable.

Recommendations for the Rail Yards

Once a master plan developer is selected for the site, neighborhoods should strive to achieve a Community Benefits Agreement that explicitly spells out the investments sought by the community as a result of the opportunity to develop the Rail Yard site. Example: from organizations like Los Angeles’ LAANE (Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy) can provide outstanding guidance in this realm.

Barelas residents will need to work closely with the developer to ensure that gentrification is limited as a result of the development. In some communities, anti-displacement regulations were adopted as part of such projects.

A Tax Increment Finance District on the Albuquerque Rail Yard Site would allow the community to utilize increased tax revenues resulting from the development to reinvest in programs and projects to strengthen the surrounding neighborhood.

THE KELLOGG LOGIC MODEL

Provided on the following pages is a template of a *Logic Model* as recommended by one of the neighborhood's largest funders, the Kellogg Foundation. With a \$100,000 grant awarded to the Barelás neighborhood by the foundation in early 2011, the development of an effective logic model presents an important opportunity for measuring the organizations' impact in strengthening the neighborhood. As demonstrated through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide, the model requires critical thinking and robust deliberation about the organization's objectives. The benefit to the community, however, is the development of measurable outcomes and the opportunity to evaluate the organization's impact rather than the default model of "throwing something up at the wall and hoping it sticks" employed too often by non-profit organizations.

Moving from left to right (when the three graphics are laid left to right, A,B,C), the basic format of the logic model transitions from "tasks," to "population," to "resources," to "throughputs," to "context," to "outputs," to "outcomes," and ending with "impact." What's most unique about the model is its rigorous allegiance to hard realities. In other words, inputted numbers are not "goals" per se, but rather expected realities according to known standards. In other words, when delineating the neighborhood's strategies for engaging more neighbors in the organization, the logic model focuses on known turnout trends resulting from door-knocking strategies rather than "guess-timated" turnouts. Every numerical

figure in the chart is related to reality on the ground, not to lofty goals.

Cases in which the neighborhood organizations exceed standard field outcomes, then, become strong selling points for the organizations' continued investment by funders like Kellogg. In cases when measurable outcomes fall below expected outputs, the organization is provided the opportunity to able to identify needed focus points – and to "pivot" to meet those challenges. Outcomes and Impacts listed in any logic model should meet five "SMART" characteristics, according to Kellogg, including being "Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic, and Timed" (Kellogg Foundation, 2004).

Development of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model is founded in the key question asked by Yogi Berra, asking "if you don't know where you're going, how are you gonna know when you get there?" (Kellogg, 2004). The use of a logic model provides a critical opportunity for evaluation of the organization's key resources, activities, inputs, outputs and outcomes. It provides a robust method for application and the achievement of the two organizations' challenging goals with a very tangible and measurable approach. Spaces noted as "(TBR)" suggest that the neighborhood should research the standard return rate for particular activities and then insert those during their work on the model. Blanks are left throughout the matrix for the community to fill out together, as part of what should be a collective strategic planning.

The following templates demonstrate a logic model approach to just one task – community engagement through a door-knocking campaign. Ideally, each of the neighborhoods focus areas would receive the same level of planning and rigorous evaluation throughout the life of the Kellogg funding.

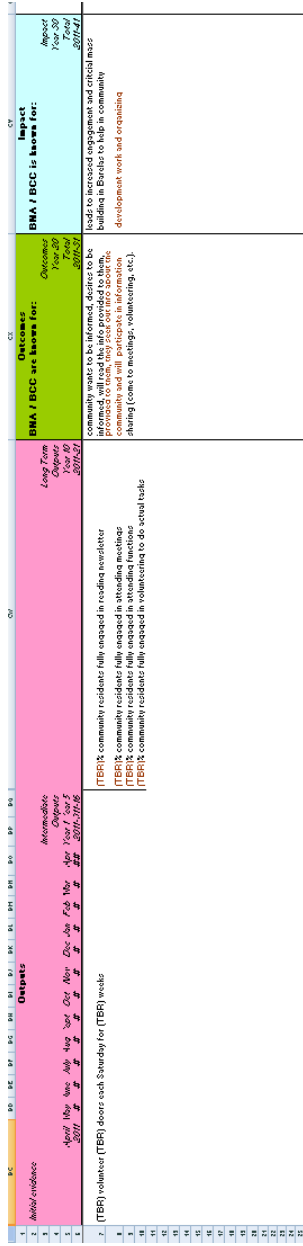
Logic Model Part A

D56	h	i	c	s	e	t	r
	Population		Environmental context		Legal		political
TAKE	<p>Incremental Comment 3500 Barrios total number of adults (TBR) # of Barrios number of children (TBR) # of businesses</p> <p>12 = total number of volunteers 1600 = total number of required newsletters 100 = number of newsletters per block 24 = cost of printing newsletters per page \$500.00 total cost of printing newsletters 4 = number of newsletters per printing newsletters 11,351 = number of hours of volunteer time required to administer set up of walk lists (TBR) sick donation requested from residents (TBR) sick donation requested from businesses</p>	<p>1600 = Barrios number of houses 12 = Barrios number of walk list snos 133 = Barrios average number of houses per block 100 = number of newsletters per block 24 = number of average required to contact in person 44 = number of hours to complete walk lists 4 = number of volunteers to complete walk lists 6 = number of newsletters to complete walk lists 11,351 = number of hours of volunteer time required to administer set up of walk lists 40 = number of hours of oversight required to administer walk lists 20 = number of hours required to prepare report of walk list program 10 = number of meetings required to set up walk list program and report results</p>	<p>community organization established as 501(c) 3 in 2010 non-profit status necessary to collect donations and insure on (TBR) number public neighborhood patrols (TBR) # of volunteers (TBR) # of different types of calls for service</p>	<p>City Council/ Isaac Bowen's office: 768-3186 City Mayor's Office: 768-3000 City Mayor's Office: 768-3000 City Mayor's Office: 768-3000 City Mayor's Office: 768-3000 State Senator Eric Clinger: 253-7600 relevant State of MM/Drop (Contact info TBR) US Senator Ron DeSantis (Contact info TBR) US Senator Tom Udall (361-6131) relevant federal Dept (contact info TBR) relevant federal Dept (contact info TBR) History of "Heart of Afton"</p>			

Logic Model Part B

c	h	t
<p>Theory concept of problem</p> <p>(Disengagement in Community Organizations) 18 = number of current attendees 20 = number of current volunteers assisting community meetings, functions, and projects</p>	<p>Intervention assumptions</p> <p>engagement is desirable in-person contact will increase & lead to (TBR)% greater engagement (TBR)% residents will read newsletter (TBR) residents will attend mtg as a result (TBR) residents will sign up to do actual work</p>	<p>Throughputs</p> <p>activities</p> <p>(TBR) volunteers conduct (TBR) hours of door knocking to complete walk lists provide newsletter in person collect (TBR) contact info interested in being on contact list to attend community functions request minimal donation of (TBD) to fund community activities</p>

Logic Model Part C



There is no question; the community of Barelas is at a crossroads and many forces of gentrification have already begun to align in ways that will change the neighborhood forever. This paper sought to identify indicators that demonstrate the trend's presence in Barelas and more importantly, to provide support to tangible measures available to the community for preparing the neighborhood for changes to come. Barelas has a core group of committed neighbors who, through their sincere and genuine efforts, have the opportunity to re-engage the community in determining its own future in ways that have not been accomplished in decades. That is the level of engagement that will be necessary to defend the "Heart of Aztlan" in the face of the many changing dynamics all around.

In its attempt to provide that type of support to the neighborhood, I've striven to complement the limited amount of literature available in academia which not only identifies gentrification, but also provides guidance to communities working to defend their community's character from being lost forever. In doing so, neighborhood leaders must find a balance between improving the neighborhood's quality of life without accelerating its gentrification and attraction to outside speculators who are more interested in the area's investment potential than in its value as a community. That question is the fundamental conflict between typical market force development and the struggle to maintain the cultural and communal meaning of any special place. In Barelas it's becoming clearer that the neighborhood is at a pivotal point in moving one direction or the other.

Within weeks of the announced master developer of the Albuquerque Rail Yards, real estate brokers began to host "open house" tours throughout the neighborhood, demonstrating how quickly market forces move. It is therefore incumbent upon the Barelas community organizations to move with the same level of

urgency and “reverence” for what is at stake in defending the “Heart of Aztlan.”

To the neighborhood organization’s excitement, significant funding support has recently been achieved in Barelás. With a \$100,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation, neighborhood leaders have the chance to prove that they can conduct serious work to make improvements for existing families in Barelás who have seen disinvestment in their community and know well the downside of a devalorization cycle. This project’s “matrix,” as featured in the middle of the paper, provides an avenue toward accomplishing those goals with tangible, measurable steps. With their newfound financial support, the two organizations have renewed responsibility to deliver outcomes for the neighborhood and key to that delivery is good management of the many projects and timelines involved.

Strong involvement and realization of neighborhood goals will help Barelás to maintain its unique character as a largely working-class neighborhood that celebrates its history and values its existing families. It will also help to ease the shock of the incoming development of the Rail Yard redevelopment by ensuring that if long-time Barelás families want to stay in the neighborhood, that they can both afford to and feel comfortable staying in the neighborhood that they love. Success in anti-gentrification strategies will also provide an important model for other historic neighborhoods facing similar pressures, contributing to what was a noticeable deficiency in literature on the topic. Dr. Córdova’s research, particularly in Barelás, remains some of the only writing that both encourages such neighborhoods to initiate such work early on, and provides recommendations on how to do so.

With success, neighborhood leaders will soon return to a day when hundreds of Barelás residents are active in creating a vibrant future for the neighborhood and its youth. For, although one realtor recently urged urban pioneers to “descend into Barelás,” as if to characterize the neighborhood as a place of destitute and hopelessness, Barelás residents know well that their neighborhood is a place of unmatched history, rich culture and legendary meaning. With the necessary level of work to strengthen what so many love about the community, Barelás will remain the revered “Heart of Aztlan” for many generations of Barelás families to come.

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